GESNERIADS

The Journal for Gesneriad Growers (formerly The Gloxinian)

Vol. 58, No. 2 Second Quarter 2008

Achimenes admirabilis

Achimenes flava

Achimenes glabrata

Achimenes longiflora

Achimenes

The Gesneriad Society, Inc.

A non-profit membership corporation chartered by the State of Missouri

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INTEREST GROUPS

Judging — *Appraisal,* 3 issues, $6. Send to Paul Susi, 10 Briarwood Lane, Millerton, NY 12546. (Subscribing to *Appraisal* is part of the responsibility of remaining an active judge.)

Gesneriad Hybridizers Association — *CrossWords,* 3 issues, $8 ($9 outside U.S.A.). Send to Martha Lacy, 260 Stoddards Wharf Rd., Gales Ferry, CT 06335 <wlacy@snet.net>.

Newsletter Editors — *Newsviews*, free to editors; $6 subscription to others. Contact Leslie Milde, 373 Main St., P.O. Box 14, Fremont, NH 03044 <meribush@aol.com>

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Gesneriphiles Internet Discussion Group — To join, visit the website <http://lists.ibiblio.org/mailman/listinfo/gesneriphiles> where you will find instructions for joining the list.

British Streptocarpus Society — <www.streptocarpussociety.org.uk> To join from the USA/Canada send $10 check payable to Dale Martens, 1247 Island View Dr., Sherrard, Illinois 61281. To join from any other country, send £7 or 10€ to Don Corfield, 1019 Warwick Rd, Acocks Green, Birmingham, England, B27 6QJ.

Marie Selby Botanical Gardens — 811 South Palm Avenue, Sarasota, FL 34236 (914-366-5731) <www.selby.org> Gardens open 364 days a year from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Admission fee; members free. Outdoor gardens, tropical display house, tree lab, al fresco lunch cafe, plant, book and gift shops.

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OBJECTS OF THE SOCIETY — The objects of The Gesneriad Society are to afford a convenient and beneficial association of persons interested in gesneriads, to stimulate a widespread interest in, gather and publish reliable information about the identification, correct nomenclature, culture and propagation of gesneriads; and to encourage the origination and introduction of new cultivars.

GESNERIAD REGISTRATION — The Gesneriad Society, Inc. is the International Registration Authority for the names and cultivars of gesneriads excepting the genus *Saintpaulia*. Any person desiring to register a cultivar should contact Judy Becker, 432 Undermountain Road, Salisbury, CT 06068 <hybridregistrar@gesneriadsociety.org>.

visit
www.gesneriadsociety.org

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CONTENTS

President's Message
— *Peter Shalit* 4
Call for Annual Meeting 5
Nominating Committee Report 5
Proposed Amendments to the Bylaws of The Gesneriad Society 6
Coming Events 8
Seed Fund
— *Gussie Farrice & Carolyn Ripps* 9
Convention Speakers
— *Allison Brigham* 12
Convention Dates to Remember 14
Convention Auction 14
The Genus *Achimenes* 15
Achimenes Species 18
Achimenes Hybrids 26
GESNERIADS Index 2007
— *Judy Becker* 27
Growing Achimenes
— *Judy Becker* 32
Growing Achimenes South of the Mason-Dixon Line
— *Julie Mavity-Hudson* 34
How I Grow Achimenes
— *Bill Price* 38
Achimenes for Summer Bloom
— *Michael J. Kartuz* 41
Growing Achimenes in the San Francisco Bay Area
— *JoAnna Behl* 42
Growing Achimenes in Florida
— *Linda Massey & Melissa McDowell* 43
What I have Learned About Growing Achimenes!
— *Ben Paternoster* 44
New Publications 47
Species Additions to Seed Fund 48
Slide Library 49
Financial Statement – 2007
— *Rebecca Fontes* 50
Donations
— *Paul Susi* 52

COVER
(see page 25 for details)

President's Message

Peter Shalit <president@gesneriadsociety.org>
Seattle, Washington, USA

This is the time of year when my light garden is overflowing with plants. As I was watering the other night, I thought about why that is. Every plant on the light stand is there for a reason. I realized I grow different plants for different purposes: plants to show; plants to sell, trade or donate; stock plants for propagation; stud plants for breeding; seedlings from my hybridizing program; new species and hybrids I am trying; and plants that I just love to have and will never get rid of because they are fun and cheerful.

Our chapter show and sale is coming up in a few months, which is one reason why my growing area is so full right now. Gesneriads (other than Saintpaulias) are very tough to time for a show. Perversely, mine tend to be at their best a few weeks before the show, or a few weeks after. But still I try to time them for the show. Three or four months before show time, I go through my growing area, clean up and groom everything, repot what I can. I try to imagine which plants might be appropriate to show in a few months. These are given special attention. Kohlerias and Streptocarpellas are cut back. Chiritas are groomed and repotted. Sinningias, well they bloom in 3 months or so from a tuber and it's awfully hard to predict when they'll sprout, but I start watering my dormant tubers about 4 months before show time and cross my fingers. Some Sinningias are constantly throwing off sprouts from the tuber, so these I will cut back to the youngest sprouts a few months before show.

In preparation for the sale, I have sweater boxes full of cuttings rooting right now – Chiritas, Kohlerias, Streptocarpellas, and Sinningias mostly, because these are currently my favorite gesneriads. Since these will be most of the plants I enter in the show, these are the ones I propagate for the sale.

The public likes to buy starts of the plants they see in our show. Last year my plant of the stunning European hybrid *Kohleria* 'Kirsten' was honored with "Best Gesneriad in Show". I had brought 20 cuttings to the sale and they all went just like that. I could have probably sold another 20. In the meantime, cuttings of another Kohleria, just as worthy, were left on the sales table because there was no mature plant in the show for the public to see.

Competing for space with the show and sale plants under the lights are all the Sinningia and Chirita seedlings in my hybridizing program. I make many crosses every year and plant 10-20 lots of my hybrid seed. To come up with a worthwhile hybrid, one has to grow lots of seedlings to maturity, and throw most of them away. This takes room, and time. Right now I have a couple hundred Chirita seedlings that are 6 months to 2 years old. They are maturing

and coming into bloom and taking up lots of space. Once they bloom I can start to cull, but until then, they have a claim to a large part of my light garden. Close behind them are about 100 hybrid Sinningia seedlings – same story. My Sinningia hybridizing has taken a back seat to the Chiritas lately but I have some exciting Sinningia projects going now, and I am eager to see what comes of them.

Most days I spend less than an hour with my plants, but it is the most relaxing part of my day – there is something new in the light garden; a hybrid is coming into bloom; a pot of seed has just sprouted; the Kohleria cuttings are pushing the top off their sweater box, just in time to bring some to this weekend's chapter meeting. These are some of the many joys of growing gesneriads.

Peter

The Gesneriad Society

52nd Annual Convention – 2008
July 1 to July 5 – Denver, Colorado

Call for 2008 Annual Membership Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the members of The Gesneriad Society will be held on Friday, July 4, at 12:00 p.m. for the purpose of transacting business that may properly come before the meeting.

Call for 2008 Board of Directors Meeting

The Board of Directors will meet on Tuesday, July 1, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., and 8:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. (if required) to transact business that may properly come before it. The new Board will hold a breakfast meeting on Saturday, July 5, at 7:00 a.m.

Allison Brigham, Recording Secretary

Nominating Committee Report

The following members have agreed to have their names put in nomination as directors for a three-year term ending in 2011:

Jacquie Eisenhut	Torrance, California
Gussie Farrice	Staten Island, New York
Dariane Joshlin	Fountain Hills, Arizona
Stephen Maciejewski	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Charlene Marietti	Medford, New Jersey
Julia Mavity-Hudson	Joelton, Tennessee
Leonard Re	Fountain Valley, California

Nominating Committee: *Suzie Larouche, Chair*
Fay Wagman
Allison Brigham

Proposed Amendments to the Bylaws of The Gesneriad Society

The following three amendments were reviewed by the Bylaws Committee and discussed at the Board of Directors Meeting held on July 8, 2007, in Miami, Florida. These amendments are presented to the membership with the Board of Director's approval and shall be voted on at the Annual Membership meeting to be held at the Convention in Denver, Colorado on July 4, 2008. The purpose of the amendments is to clarify the responsibilities of the Treasurer and the Finance Committee related to the finances of The Gesneriad Society. The text of the current section is followed by the proposed amendment.

Current

Article IV Section 6. Treasurer – The Treasurer shall be responsible for the receipts and deposit of all monies of the Society and shall make authorized disbursements, by check only, to cover the expenses of the Society. All checks issued shall be signed by any two of the following four officers: President, First or Second Vice-President, Treasurer. The Treasurer shall keep an accurate book record of all monies of the Society that are received and disbursed; and, shall render financial reports of such monies, and of all related transactions, as the Board of Directors may require.

***To be amended as follows*:**

Article IV Section 6. Treasurer – The Treasurer shall be responsible for the receipt and deposit of all monies of the Society, shall make authorized disbursements, by check only, to cover the expenses of the Society, and shall open and maintain investment and other accounts at the direction of the Finance Committee. All checks shall be signed by any two of the following five officers: President, First Vice-President, Second Vice-President, Recording Secretary and Treasurer. The Treasurer shall keep an accurate book record of all monies of the Society that are received and disbursed; and shall render financial reports of such monies, and of all related transactions, as the Board of Directors may require, but not less than on an annual basis at the end of the fiscal year. The Treasurer shall file documents related to the Society's tax-exempt status with governmental agencies as required. The Treasurer shall ensure that all publicly available financial and credit information regarding the Society is accurate and up to date. The Treasurer may, upon notification to the Board of Directors, delegate to an assistant specific responsibilities of this office except for the disbursement of funds and the filing of financial reports or documents with governmental agencies.

Current

Article IV Section 12. Finance Committee – The Finance Committee shall arrange for an audit of the Treasurer's records and supported and related records maintained by the Membership Secretary, and report of that audit shall be presented to the Membership at each Membership Meeting and printed in GESNERIADS. The Finance Committee shall be responsible for all financial planning and budgetary control and it shall present a budget for The Gesneriad Society, Inc. activities for the following year to the Board of Directors.

***To be amended as follows*:**

Article IV Section 12. Finance Committee – The Finance Committee shall be responsible for all financial planning and budgetary control and shall present a budget for all Society activities for the following fiscal year to the Board of Directors; shall provide to the Board of Directors, on an annual basis, a report of all investments made during the previous year and the status of all existing investments; shall arrange for an annual review of the Treasurer's records, the report of which review shall be presented to the Membership at each Membership Meeting and printed in GESNERIADS; shall arrange for an audit of all the financial records of the Society every third year, or more frequently if required by the Board of Directors, the report of which audit shall be distributed to the Board of Directors and made available to the Membership. The Finance Committee shall make all investment decisions regarding the Society's funds and, with the approval of the Board of Directors, may engage an independent financial advisor to consult on or oversee the Society's investments. The members of the Finance Committee shall be the Treasurer, the Business Manager, a chairperson and other members as may be appropriate, appointed by the President, with the approval of the Board of Directors.

Current

Article VIII Section 1. Society Funds – Neither the Board of Directors, nor anyone delegated by them, nor any of the officers, shall incur any debt or liability in the name of the Society beyond the available or maturing funds in the hands of the Treasurer, excluding the monies or securities held for specific purposes. No member of The Gesneriad Society shall profit financially from the net income of the organization.

***To be amended as follows*:**

Article VIII Section 1. Society Funds – Neither the Board of Directors, nor anyone delegated by them, nor any of the officers, shall incur any debt or liability in the name of the Society beyond the available or maturing funds in the hands of the Treasurer, excluding the monies or securities held for specific purposes. No member of the Society shall profit financially from the net income of the organization. The officers indicated in Article IV, Section 6 shall sign checks and shall be signatories to investment and other accounts. Funds in investment accounts may only be added to or removed upon the written direction of the Finance Committee.

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Coming Events

April 26 – Massachusetts – New England Gesneriad Society participating in the annual combined plant societies' sale at the University of Massachusetts, Eastern Extension Center, 240 Beaver St., Waltham (along with the Begonia Society, HortResources, and Master Gardeners). Saturday 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. Contact Lilya Veneziano at 617-479-3680 or <sonytec@aolcom>.

April 27 – Washington – The Puget Sound Gesneriad Society show and plant sale "Let's Play Monopoly" at the Center for Urban Horticulture in the University District of Seattle. Sunday from noon to 4:00 pm. Contact Jean Chin <chin_jean@yahoo.com> or Bob Clark <chiritaland@gmail.com>.

May 3 – British Columbia, Canada – Vancouver African Violet and Gesneriad Society annual show "Violet Reflections" and sale in the Floral Hall, VanDusen Botanical Garden, West 33rd Avenue and Oak Street, Vancouver. Saturday 1:00 to 4:00 pm. Show admission $2. Contact Arleen Dewell at 604-254-8975 or <arleendewell@shaw.ca>.

The Shopping Mall

"OZARK" Sinningias, African Violets and other Gesneriads. Email: <plantman@ipa.net> (no catalog). Dave's Violets, 1372 S. Kentwood Avenue, Springfield, MO 65804 (417) 887-8904 **<www.davesviolets.com>**.

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MRS STREP STREPS – Streptocarpus, Chiritas, and other Gesneriads. Email for list of available plants. Kathy Spissman, 4086 Brownlee Dr., Tucker, GA 30084. Phone (770) 939-5289. Email: mrsstrepstreps@comcast.net.

OUT OF AFRICA, Blooming Streptocarpus. Send $1 for catalog. Gary S. Mikita, 2842 Brown St., Portage, IN 46368, Phone (219) 763-4861. E-mail garymikita@cs.com.

PAT'S PETS, Gesneriads and African Violets. Send $2.00 for catalog. Pat's Pets, 4189 Jarvis Rd., Hillsboro, MO 63050. Phone (636) 789-3604. E-mail PATSPETS@sbcglobal.net. Internet Home Page (catalog) http://www.geocities.com/patspets@sbcglobal.net.

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Lauray of Salisbury 31
Logan Nursery....8
Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses, Inc.....7
Mrs Strep Streps....8
Out of Africa....8
Pat's Pets 8
Violet Barn....48

Seed Fund

Gussie Farrice <hybrids@gesneriadsociety.org>
Carolyn Ripps <species@gesneriadsociety.org>

As I sit to write this message, the weather outside is cold, wet and dreary. It is raining rather heavily and the mood is really dark and glum. This is the time when we head to our plant rooms, greenhouses, basements or spare rooms and tend to our plants. This is one of the constants in our lives that gives us pleasure. There are times when we may not think so. That is when the plant stands may need to be cleaned, plants repotted, watered or are just looking poorly. Hopefully we can cheer ourselves up by planting some seeds and having the joyful anticipation of what the results will be. Whether we plant species or hybrid seed, we can have an expectation of pleasure waiting for the first growth to show. So come on … give yourself some joy. Plant a packet or two of seeds today.

We wish to thank the following donors for their recent contributions to the Seed Fund: Marilyn Allen, Alison Bilverstone, Karyn Cichocki, Jonathan Ertelt, Paula Farago, Robert Hall, Richard Holzman, Leong Tuck-Lock, Dale Martens, Carolyn Ripps, Peter Shalit, and Michel Tremblay.

Seed Packets — $2.00 each

Please

- Make checks payable to the The Gesneriad Society in U.S. funds
- To pay by credit card, send your credit card number, expiration date, and signature, and indicate if the card is Mastercard or Visa ($6.00 minimum)
- Provide a self-addressed, stamped envelope (non-U.S. orders will have the postage added to their credit card bill)
- List alternate choices
- Include your membership number (first number on your mailing label)

Note

- There is a limit of one seed packet of a single variety per order
- There is a limit of 25 seed packets per order
- There is a household limit of 50 seed packets per calendar year

Send orders for hybrid seed from the following list to:
Gussie Farrice
121 Nelson Avenue
Staten Island, NY 10308

Seed Fund – Hybrids

Achimenes (D)
- hybrid mix (B,L)
- *longiflora* × 'Klaus Neubener'

Aeschynanthus (B)
- hybrid, lg orange/red

Chirita
- *caliginosa* × *sericea* (LM)
  'Dreamtime' × self (sp. 'New York' × *flavimaculata*)

Chrysothemis (F,LM)
- *pulchella* hybrid mix
  hybrid mix

Columnea (B)
  'Bold Adventure' × self
  hybrids (orange)

Episcia (H,L,B,F)
- *cupreata* hybrids × 'Suomi'
  cupreata hybrids mix

- hybrid mix
  mixed hybrids (5 crosses)

Eucodonia (D,F,P)
  hybrid mix

Gesneria (H,F,L)
  'Flashdance'
- 'Sundrop'

Kohleria (D)
- hybrid mix

Seemannia
- (*sylvatica* × *purpurascens* GRF 9670) × self
  'Medusa' × self

Sinningia (D)
  canescens × *leucotricha* 'Max Dekking'
  cardinalis × *glazioviana*
  cardinalis 'Innocent' × *iarae* (LM)
  (*cardinalis* 'Skydiver' × *iarae*) × self
  eumorpha hybrids mix (F,R)
- *glazioviana* × *iarae* F2
  glazioviana × *leopoldii* F2 (LM)
  (*iarae* × *cardinalis* compact) × self
  (*sellovii* × 'Apricot Bouquet') × self
- *warmingii* × *curtiflora* F2
- 'Angora Love' × 'Margaret' (L)
  'Anne Crowley' (F,L)
- 'Apricot Bouquet' seedling × 'Apricot Bouquet' (LM)
  'Apricot Bouquet' × self (LM)
  ('Apricot Bouquet' × self) × self (LM)
  ('Apricot Bouquet' × self) × *conspicua* (F,L)
  ('Apricot Bouquet' × self) × (*conspicua* × *eumorpha*) (F,L)
  'Bewitched' × self (F,L)
  ('Cheryl's Cherry Chips' × 'Buffy') × self
  'Cheryl's Pink Beauty' × self
  'Claire's Choice' × self
  'Delta Fox' × self (F,P)
  'Desafinado' × self
  'Diego' (red) (F,L)
  'Diego' (pink)
- 'Dollbaby' (F,P)
  'Doris' F3 × self
- 'Good Pink' × self (F,L)
- 'Jubilee' × self (F,L)
- 'Krezdorn Yellow' × self (L)
- 'Krishna' × self
  'Little Imp' (F,P)
  'Maiden's Blush' × self (F,P)
- 'Mark Twain' × self
- 'Mother of Pearl' × self (F,P)
  'Mothers Day' × self (F,L)
  'Pale Beauty' × self (L)
- 'Pink Ice' (F,P)
- 'Premier Pink' × self (F,P)
  'Pure Pink' × self (F,P)
  'Ruby Red' × self (F,P)
- 'Scarlet Sunset' (F,P)
- ('Scoundrel' × self) × self
  'Super Orange' × self
  'Tampa Bay Beauty' × self (L)
- 'Ted Bona' × self (F, P)
- 'Georgia Sunset' hybrid mix
  "Hummingbird Mix"
  miniature hybrid mix (F,P)
- miniature hybrid mix (lav/purple (F, P)
  pink hybrid mix
  peloric hybrid mix
  peloric hybrid mix, red
  Super Mini F5

Sinningia speciosa **hybrids** (F,R)
  blue mix
  mini
    lavender
    pink
  - purple
    red
    rose
    white
  orchid/purple mix
  pink mix
  pink/white mix
  pink dwarf
- purple peloric
  purple w/spots
  red mix
  red w/spots
  red w/white edge
  white w/red spots
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- purple slipper
  mixed slipper
- AC1503 × *speciosa* 'Regina'
  Small's dwarf mix
  Charles Lawn hybrid mix
- Early Giant mix
- Jack Evans purple mix
- Jack Evans red mix
  mixed hybrids

Smithiantha (D)
- 'Little One' (F,L)
- hybrid mix (F,L,M)

Streptocarpus

- ('Amethyst' × self) × self
- 'Bethan' × self (R)
  'Black Panther' × self
  'Bristol's Charm' × self
  'Bristol's Ice Castle' × self
  'Bristol's Gum Drop' × self
  'Bristol's Hey Mei' × self
- 'Bristol's Hot Rod' × self
  'Bristol's Luv It' × self
  'Bristol's Popsicle' × self (R)
  'Bristol's Ripe Melon' × self
  'Canterbury Surprise' × self (V)
  'Canterbury Surprise' × 'Coral Flair' (V)
  ('Canterbury Surprise' × 'Happy Snowflake') × self
- 'Cape Beauties' × self (F,P)
  'Charlotte' × 'Northwoods Bear-ly Salmon'
  'Crystal Wonder' × self
- 'Demeter' × self (R)
  'Electric Blue' × self
  'Elegance' × self
- 'Falling Stars' × self (R)
  'Fancy Pants' × self
  'Fernwoods Bam Bam' × *modesta*
  'Fernwoods Fairy Princess' × self
  'Festival Wales' × self
  'Fleischle Princesse' × self
  'Franken Jane Elizabeth' × self
  'Franken Stacey' × self
  ('Iced T' × 'Twilight') × ('Canterbury Surprise' × 'Happy')
- 'Karen' × self
  'Keri's Purple' × self
  'Kim' × self
- 'Kitten Face' × self (R)
  'Midnight Flame' × self
- 'Mini Pink Fu' × self (R)
  'Northwoods Bear-ly Salmon' × self
  'Northwoods Bear-ly Salmon' × 'Velma'
  'Park's Holiday Hybrid' × self
- 'Party Doll' × self (R)
  'Passion Pink' × self
- 'Pegasus' × self (R)
- 'Popsicle' × self
  'Royal' (red) (R)
- 'Royal' (white/pink stripes) (R)
- 'Sandra' × self (R)
  'Scarlet Glitter' × unknown
  'Somerset Purple Ice' × self
  'Spooky' × self
  'Susan' × self
- 'Thalia' × self (R)
- 'Ulysses' × self (R)
- *montigena* × *rexii* natural hybrid *(primulifolius* × *rexii)* × self
- *rexii* × *gardenii*
  rexii hybrids (F,R)
- Wiesmoor hybrids (F,R)
  hybrid, lt blue/dk blue lines (R)
  hybrid, lg burgundy (R)
- hybrid, lg purple (R)
  hybrid, lg white (R)
  hybrid, lg mixed colors
  hybrid, pink/pink
  hybrid, red
  hybrid, red × self
  hybrid, white/pink × self
  hybrid mix (F,R)
- New Zealand hybrid mix (F,R)

Subgenus *Streptocarpella*

caulescens × *pallidiflorus* (natural hybrid)
hybrids
'White Butterfly' × self

Intergenerics

Paliavana prasinata × *Sinningia macropoda* MP 944
Paliavana prasinata × *Sinningia reitzii* MP 949

Mixed gesneriads

- denotes LIMITED quantities

Seed Fund Key

(A)	Alpine or cool greenhouse	(LM)	Low to medium height
(B)	Suitable for hanging basket	(M)	Medium height; 1 to 2 feet
(D)	Has dormant period, forming tubers or rhizomes	(MT)	Medium to tall
(F)	Blooms readily in fluorescent light	(P)	Petite or miniature; under 6"
(G)	Recommended for greenhouses; requires space	(R)	Rosette in form
(H)	Requires humidity and warmth	(S)	Requires sun to bloom
(L)	Low growing; not more than 12"	(T)	Tall plants; generally over 3 feet
		(U)	Unifoliate or single leaf
		(V)	Leaves may be variegated

Convention Speakers

Allison Brigham, Speakers Chair
<denverconvention@gesneriadsociety.org>

This year's programs will tempt you to use gesneriads outdoors as accent, container, hanging basket, and bedding plants; transport you to Ecuador on a photographic, research, and collecting expedition for gesneriads; and update your technical and practical knowledge of growing and exhibiting the African violet species.

No longer restricted to windowsills and light stands, gesneriads are not only summering on the patio, but taking root in the summer garden. Who better than **Marilyn Allen** and **Jonathan Ertelt** to remove some of the mystery and offer field-tested recommendations for successfully growing "Gesneriads in the Garden". Marilyn will address the ability of gesneriads to survive on the North American Pacific coast, including factors contributing to success and possible mitigation techniques. Within the same program, Jonathan will explore growing gesneriads and some companion plants outdoors east of the Mississippi River in the southeastern United States. Together, the program is designed to present an overview of using gesneriads outdoors in temperate North America.

Marilyn and Jonathan are well known in the gesneriad community. She has been growing gesneriads since the early 1970s, experimenting with different growing methods and techniques indoors and outdoors as well as in a greenhouse. As a former nurse, she is a skilled observer and especially interested in documenting the conditions under which gesneriads grow successfully and the factors that influence their tolerance to various situations and environments. Jonathan earned a M.Ed. from the Peabody College of Vanderbilt University and has been the greenhouse manager of the Department of Biological Sciences at Vanderbilt for over 10 years. His interest in gesneriads spans more than 25 years and includes growing, lectures and presentations, publications, and field work, all of which reflect his commitment to education and learning.

Consider the two articles describing the 2007 Gesneriad Research Expedition to Ecuador and color photographs in the First Quarter 2008 issue of GESNERIADS as an appetizer. For the main course, **Dr. John L. Clark**, Assistant Professor of Biology at The University of Alabama, will introduce you to the Gesneriaceae of the Ecuadorean cloud and rain forests in his presentation "New Gesneriads from the Rain Forests of Ecuador". He is known to members of our Society as a frequent contributor to GESNERIADS and convention speaker. Drawing on this and over ten years of research in the Neotropics, Dr. Clark will share stunning photographs of gesneriads in their natural habitat and describe the gesneriad flora of Ecuador. His research interests focus primarily on the molecular systematics, phylogeny, pollination biology, and taxonomy of the Gesneriaceae as well as the floristics and conservation of neotropical flora. Dr. Clark received his Ph.D. from George Washington University.

This year's convention has a subtheme, which focuses on African violet species. **Dr. James F. Smith**, Professor of Biology at Boise State University, will present an "Update on the systematics and evolution of *Saintpaulia* and *Streptocarpus*". Dr. Smith uses molecular systematics in his research to

understand the evolutionary history of plant groups by comparing DNA sequences. He has published extensively on the systematics and evolution of Gesneriaceae, especially the New World genus *Columnea*. His current research emphasizes species-level relations within *Columnea* as well as investigating the molecular basis for floral symmetry among neotropical members of the family. He also conducts research in Piperaceae (the black pepper family). Dr. Smith earned an MS in Biology from Cornell University, a Ph.D. in Botany from the University of Wisconsin–Madison, and held a post-doctoral position at the Smithsonian Institution.

Having stimulated interest in the African violet species, **Linda Golubski** continues the discussion with detailed recommendations for "Growing and exhibiting African violet species". In many respects these plants are more challenging to grow successfully than today's hybrids created from them. To ensure growers' success, Linda will explain the importance of knowing which are warm- or cool-growing species, discuss basic culture, identify the shy bloomers and show-stoppers, and touch on classification, especially as it applies to exhibiting and judging. Her credentials are extensive as a two-time winner of the best species African violet at national African Violet Society of America (AVSA) conventions and winner of the best collection (species African violets) at the 2001 Kansas City AGGS Convention. Linda is a Master Judge of The Gesneriad Society, Senior Judge of AVSA, the 2nd Vice-President of AVSA, and currently holds offices in her local affiliates and the Missouri Valley AV Council.

Gesneriad Hybridizers Association Speaker

Dale Martens provided this preview of the GHA program and reminder that all convention attendees are welcome at the GHA meeting. **David Harris** of Dave's Violets in the beautiful Ozark Mountains of Missouri will be the GHA speaker on "Hybridizing Miniature Sinningias". His "Ozark" Sinningias are very popular as he is careful not to release any hybrids unless the leaves as well as the flowers meet his high criteria. David has been hybridizing miniature Sinningias since 1996 and has won numerous awards at African Violet Society of America (AVSA) conventions, Missouri Valley African Violet Council shows, and at The Gesneriad Society's Heart of America Chapter shows. His 2007 awards included Best New Gesneriad for *S.* 'Ozark Red Lightning' and AVSA's Best Commercial Gesneriad for *S.* 'Ozark Fireworks'.

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Convention Dates to Remember

Register Early! Remember that early admission to plant sales will be in registration number order.

June 1	Convention registration deadline. After this date, registration for activities will be on a space-available basis and subject to a $35 late fee.
June 7	Hotel registration deadline to guarantee convention room rate.
June 15	Judging School registration deadline. Be reminded that no registrations will be accepted at convention.
	Deadline for artistic entry niche reservations, and for commercial and educational exhibit registrations.
June 23	Flower Show awards donation deadline.

To register online, go to www.gesneriadsociety.org/conv2008/

Convention Auction

Paul Susi, Development Chair

For the silent auction in Denver we are asking for your donations of gesneriad or horticulturally related items. We like to highlight plant material at the live auction – show plants, new hybrids, unusual plants and so forth. All auction proceeds benefit the Elvin McDonald Research Endowment Fund. If you cannot attend convention, you can mail your item to Irina Nicholson, 2512 South Balsam Way, Lakewood, CO 80227 <denverconvention@gesneriadsociety.org>.

At the Denver convention this year we will be holding the live auction at Saturday's luncheon and, as we did in 2007, we will again auction fifteen minutes in the Sales Room with Jon Dixon at the 2009 Convention in Washington, DC. The silent auction will run its usual course, from Friday morning to just before the Saturday luncheon. All items won, from either the silent or the live auction, can be picked up and paid for after the luncheon.

Questions about the auction can be addressed to Suzie Larouche, 50 John Street, Suite 710, Toronto, Ontario M5V 3T5, Canada <development@gesneriadsociety.org>.

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The Genus *Achimenes*

Laurence E. Skog & Jeanne Katzenstein

Achimenes is a popular neotropical genus in widespread cultivation – many of the 25 species, hundreds of cultivars, and dozens of intergeneric crosses are being grown worldwide. All a grower may know about Achimenes is that they have underground rhizomes and showy flowers in many colors that bloom mostly in late summer and fall. Here is a more complete picture of the genus.

Establishment of the Genus: *Achimenes* Persoon, 1806, *Synopsis Plantarum* 2:164.

Etymology (history of the word): The name Achimenes was first used by Patrick Browne in *The Civil and Natural History of Jamaica in Three Parts* in 1756. The derivation and meaning of the name have never been satisfactorily explained but could possibly be a modification of Achaemenis, a miraculous herb of Demokrit, which had strong effect on culprits so that they confessed their sins under pain; or (more probably) was after Achaimenes (the Persian Haxamani), the mythical ancestor of the Persian dynasty of Achaemenids (see Nicolson, 1981).

Synonyms: *Trevirana* (1809), *Locheria* (1848), *Guthnickia* (1849), *Dicyrta* (1849), *Eumolpe* (1850), *Scheeria* (1853), and *Plectoploma* (1854).

Placement of the Genus: Family Gesneriaceae, subfamily Gesnerioideae, tribe Gloxinieae.

Geographical Distribution: The majority of species are endemic to Mexico. Several species occur also in Central America (Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama) as well as the islands of the Greater and Lesser Antilles (Dominican Republic, Guadeloupe, Haiti, Jamaica, and Martinique). A few may occur in South America (Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Venezuela) but these collections may be the result of escape from cultivation and naturalization (which may also be the case for most of the distribution in the Caribbean).

Habitat: Achimenes are terrestrials of the tropical rain forests, found in at least partial sunlight and with an ample supply of water, on the forest floor, on wet rocks, and often on shaded banks near streams, at an altitude ranging from 25 m to 2400 m (80 to 7875 ft), mostly in areas with a pronounced dry season in which the plants go dormant, and then sprout up again from the underground rhizomes.

Habit: Stems are slender, erect, ascending or spreading. The thin-textured leaves have serrated edges and appear opposite, iso- or anisophyllous (of different sizes). In most cases the leaf surface is covered with rather bristly hairs. The inflorescences are axillary, of single flowers or two to three in a cyme. The sepals are free. The corolla may be funnel-shaped, campanulate or salverform with a narrow tube and wide flat limb. The color range is very wide: red, orange, yellow, purple, lavender, rose, pink, and white. The ovary is semi- to completely inferior, the style curved, and the stigma bilobed, stomatomorphic or cupulate. Plants form underground rhizomes and sometimes propagules in the leaf axils. The fruit is a dry, pointed, bivalved capsule.

Pollinators: Most likely species with red flowers are pollinated by hummingbirds, species with campanulate flowers are probably pollinated by bees, and species with salverform flowers are likely pollinated by butterflies, but there are few actual observations.

Chromosome Number: 2n = 22.

Number of Species: 25 (see list of species starting on page 18)

Type Species: *A. erecta* (Lam.) H.P. Fuchs, the correct name for Persoon's conserved type species *A. coccinea* (Scopoli) Pers.

Earliest Illustrations: 1756, *A. erecta* (as *A. minor, erect, simplex*). P. Browne: *The Civil and Natural History of Jamaica in Three Parts*, tab. 30, fig. 1; and 1797, *A. erecta* (as *Cyrilla pulchella*), *Botanical Magazine* 11: plate 374.

Common Names: Many have been applied to the genus Achimenes: Cupid's Bower, Hot Water Plants, Japanese Pansies, Kimono Plants, Magic Plants, Monkey-Faced Pansies, Nut Orchids, Orchid Pansies, Rainbow Flowers, Widow's Tears, Wind Flowers.

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Achimenes erecta
(photo by Margaret Stone)

Achimenes grandiflora
growing in Mexico in 1959
(photo by Harold Moore)

Achimenes pedunculata
growing in Costa Rica in 1978
(photo by Leon Glicenstein)

Achimenes Species

Laurence E. Skog & Jeanne Katzenstein

Achimenes admirabilis Wiehler 1992. *Phytologia* 73(3): 220.

From southern Mexico, this compact species with late-blooming flowers has slender stems 10-25 cm (4-10 inches) tall and equal-sized hirsute leaves in whorls of 3-4. The tubular corollas have a minute spur and are bright orange-red, the lobes are spreading and unequal, the throat is yellow with maroon spotting. (admirabilis = admirable or noteworthy)

Achimenes antirrhina (DC.) C.V. Morton 1936. *Bull Misc. Inform. Kew* 1936: 11.

From Mexico and Guatemala, this species has upright stems 30-45 cm (12-18 inches) long with opposite leaves. The corollas are a strong reddish orange with an orange-yellow throat with red dots and lines inside which show as brownish marks on the yellow tube. (antirrhina = resembling a snapdragon)

Achimenes brevifolia C.V. Morton 1938. *Bull. Misc. Inform. Kew* 1938: 292.

From Mexico, this low-growing and very rare species has small heart-shaped hairless leaves, and small solitary flowers. The corollas are white with small marginal teeth similar to *A. fimbriata*. (brevifolia = short leaves)

Achimenes candida Lindl. 1848. *J. Hort Soc. London* 3: 317.

From Mexico, Guatemala, Costa Rica, and Panama, this small-growing species is usually one foot or less tall. The small white corollas (usually 3 on a peduncle) have red or purple lines and dots emerging from the throat above and yellow dots coming out below. It is similar to *A. obscura* but has larger leaves and a notch at the top of the nectary. (candida = pure white)

Achimenes cettoana H.E. Moore 1960. *Baileya* 8: 144.

From Mexico, this species was collected in Chiapas by Dr. Harold Moore. This compact-growing plant has thin, short 20-30 cm (8-12 inch) branching, upright stems. The long, narrow 3-whorled leaves are on short petioles. The flowers appear over a long period, singly in the axils. The corollas are 2.5 cm (1 inch) across, light purple with a pale area on the lower lobe, and have a narrow throat. (cettoana = honors the Cetto family of Chiapas who helped Dr. Moore in his search of that area)

Achimenes dulcis C.V. Morton 1938. *Bull. Misc. Inform. Kew* 1938: 293.

Endemic to Mexico, this hairy species grows erect to 45-60 cm (1.5 to 2 feet) tall and usually flowers in September. The leaves have a dull silvery green cast. The corollas are 10 cm wide × 5 cm long (4 inches wide × 2 inches long), campanulate, and white with glistening white hairs. The upper lobes are bent backwards making the corolla look like a nodding "slipper" Sinningia. The throat inside is flushed with pale yellow and lines of gray dots. The rhizomes are long and creamy white. (dulcis = sweet)

Achimenes erecta (Lam.) H.P. Fuchs 1963. *Acta Bot. Neerl.* 12: 15.

With a wide distribution, this species occurs in Mexico, Belize, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Nicaragua, and Panama. It was the first species of *Achimenes* introduced (from Jamaica) to England in 1778 by William Forsythe and was also known as *A. coccinea*, *A. rosea*, or *A. pulchella*. It is a medium-sized trailing plant with stems up to 45 cm (18 inches) long, with small, narrow leaves paired or 3-whorled. The flowers are numerous and small, the corolla color a vivid red. It blooms over a long period in early winter. (erecta = upright)

Achimenes fimbriata Rose ex C.V. Morton 1936. *Bull Misc. Inform. Kew* 1936: 12.

This compact species is endemic to Mexico. The stems and calyces are hairless; the leaves relatively large. The small, bell-shaped corollas are white with purple markings and have toothed lobes. (fimbriata = fringed)

Achimenes flava C.V. Morton 1936. *Bull Misc. Inform. Kew* 1936: 13.

This species is found over a large area of Mexico. It has long trailing stems 35 cm (14 inches) and bright green leaves. The corollas are dark yellow, about 1.5 cm (.5 inch) wide and 1 cm (.4 inches) long. The flowers are about the size of *A. erecta*, but the corolla color is a strong orange yellow with scattered dark red dots inside. (flava = yellow)

Achimenes glabrata (Zucc.) Fritsch 1894. In: *Engl. & Prantl, Nat. Pflanzenfam.* 4(3b): 174.

From Mexico, this species grows to 46 cm (18 inches) on tall weak hairless stems. The slender leaves are also hairless. The large white corollas are about 5 cm (2 inches) long with toothed or fringed margins. They are streaked with yellow inside and sometimes are lavender-flushed. (glabrata = smooth)

Achimenes grandiflora (Schiede) DC. 1839. *Prodr.* 7: 536.

This is another wide-spread species coming from Mexico, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama. It is a sturdy erect plant growing to 30 cm (12 inches) tall or more with hairy stems and relatively large rough, hairy leaves. The flowers occur singly on 4 cm (1.5 inches) peduncles and have deep reddish purple corollas with a pure white patch around the throat with many small red dots in rows inside. The characteristic shape of the corolla includes a pouched tube with a blunt spur at the base, sometimes with toothed margins. Several distinct clones have been in cultivation. (grandiflora = large flower)

Achimenes heterophylla (Mart.) DC. 1939. *Prodr.* 7: 536.

Found only in Mexico, this species has upright stems to 30 cm (12 inches) tall. The unequal leaf pairs are not conspicuous, and sometimes are 3-whorled. The trumpet-shaped corollas, barely swollen except at the base, have deeply lobed limbs. The color is a strong reddish orange. The rhizomes are large and can be 8-10 cm (3-4 inches) long. (heterophylla = leaves of more than one form)

Achimenes pedunculata
(grown by Maryjane Evans;
photo by John Evans)

Achimenes mexicana (grown at
the Smithsonian greenhouses;
photo by Leslie Brothers)

Achimenes cettoana
(grown by Maryjane Evans; photo by John Evans)

Achimenes heterophylla

Achimenes antirrhina
(grown at the Smithsonian greenhouses; photos by Leslie Brothers)

Achimenes patens *Achimenes skinneri*
(photos from the collection of Hans Wiehler)

Achimenes grandiflora 'Robert Dressler'
(photo from the collection of Hans Wiehler)

Achimenes dulcis (grown at the Smithsonian greenhouses; photo by Leslie Brothers)

Achimenes fimbriata (grown at Cornell University, photo from the collection of Hans Wiehler)

Achimenes hintoniana Ramírez Roa & L.E. Skog 2002. *Novon* 12: 382.

From western Mexico, this species is 5-56 cm (about 2-20 inches) tall with hairy upright stems from thick reddish rhizomes. The flowers are single in the axils, with deep purple or rarely white corollas 4-6 cm (1.5-2.5 inches) long with a broad limb. The throat of the corolla is white with purple spots. The species resembles and is closely related to *A. mexicana* which differs in distribution, and in the broad calyx lobes and a more swollen corolla tube. (hintoniana = named in honor of George Hinton, a plant collector in Mexico in the early 20th century)

Achimenes longiflora DC. 1839. *Prodr.* 7: 536.

Another widespread species, this one comes from Mexico, Costa Rica, Dominica, El Salvador, Guadeloupe, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Martinique, Nicaragua, Panama, and may be escaped and naturalized in Colombia, Venezuela, and Brazil. The thin, trailing stems can reach 60 cm (2 feet) in length. The green leaves are paired or 3-4 whorled, sometimes flushed red underneath. With the largest corollas of any species, up to 10 cm (4 inches) across the circular face, the flowers appear singly in the axils. It is distinguished by corolla tubes that bend downward and the limb being so oblique it almost lines up with the base of the tube. The corollas are blue or blue-violet with a white throat, occasionally with purple above and yellow below around the keyhole-shaped throat. There is a white form, *A. longiflora* var. *alba*. The rhizomes are small, pear-shaped, and occur on long, thin stolons. (longiflora = long flower)

Achimenes mexicana (Seem.) Benth. & Hook.f. ex Fritsch 1894. In: *Engl. & Prantl, Nat. Pflanzenfam.* 4(3b): 174.

From Mexico, this species has upright stems to 30 cm (12 inches) tall with velvety leaves. The species blooms for a short period in mid-season with Sinningia-like flowers that are 5 cm (2 inches) across with a broad tube. The corollas are in shades, ranging with age and culture, from strong to moderate violet with a white throat below. (mexicana = from Mexico)

Achimenes misera Lindl. 1848. *J. Hort Soc. London* 3: 319.

With limited distribution in Mexico, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, this species is a robust grower with sprawling stems to 25 cm (10 inches) long. The opposite leaves are small and bright green. The small flowers appear in September, white with purple splotches inside the corollas showing through the somewhat flattened tube, similar to *A. warszewicziana*. (misera = wretched)

Achimenes nayaritensis L.E. Skog 1987. *Opera Bot.* 92:225.

This species comes from Nayarit, Mexico. Most plant parts are sparsely hairy. The stems are erect or ascending to 30 cm (12 inches) tall, nearly glabrous. The leaves are strongly unequal to nearly equal in a pair. The pale lavender corollas appear singly in the upper axils or clustered toward the apex of the stem. The throat is yellow on the upper side and purple-streaked; the lobes are spreading. (nayaritensis = from Nayarit, Mexico)

Achimenes obscura C.V. Morton 1936. *Bull Misc. Inform. Kew* 1936: 14.

From Mexico, this small, hairy plant has stems to 15 cm (6 inches) with opposite leaves. The flowers are solitary or in pairs, corollas 1.25 cm (.5 inch) long, dull white spotted with purple inside. They are largely hidden by the leaves. This species differs from *A. candida* in having hairy rather than glabrous stems and large leaves more prominently toothed. (obscura = hidden)

Achimenes occidentalis C.V. Morton 1963. *Baileya* 10: 153.

From Mexico, this species has unbranched short stems to 20 cm (8 inches), opposite hairy leaves, and inconspicuous small white corollas. It was once identified as a white form of *A. erecta*, but is distinguished by the mouth-shaped stigma. (occidentalis = western)

Achimenes patens Benth. 1841. *Pl. Hartw.*: 67

Endemic to Mexico, this species grows to 25 cm (10 inches) tall and has opposite bright green leaves. Its corolla has a conspicuous long spur balancing the slender tube with the oblique limb. The lobes are deeply notched, 3 cm (1.25 inches) across. The color is usually deep purple with a white throat, but the selection *A. patens* 'Major' has deep reddish purple corollas. (patens = spreading)

Achimenes pedunculata Benth. 1841. *Pl. Hartw.*: 78.

Another widespread species found in Mexico, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama, it has also been found, probably escaped and naturalized, in Venezuela and Colombia. It is the tallest growing species of *Achimenes*, with stems up to 90 cm (3 feet) high. The leaves are opposite, and nearly equal in a pair. The corollas are 2 cm (.75 inch) across and 3 cm (1.25 inches) long, trumpet-shaped with an open, round throat. The color is a brilliant red-orange with a yellow throat lined with red streaks. (pedunculata = bearing flowers on a stalk)

Achimenes saxicola (Brandegee) C.V. Morton 1936. *Bull. Misc. Inform. Kew* 1936: 14.

This very rare species is believed to be known from a single collection from Chiapas in Mexico, but has been reported also from Costa Rica and Panama, but those latter collections may actually be *A. candida*. The plants are 5-25 cm (2-10 inches) tall, with leaves about 4-7 cm (2-3 inches) long. The flowers are solitary in the axils or maybe 2, with small white corollas. (saxicola = growing among rocks)

Achimenes skinneri Lindl. 1847. *J. Hort. Soc. London* 2: 293, pl 4, f. 2.

From Mexico, Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Honduras, this species has erect or ascending stems to 75 cm (2.5 feet). It blooms from July to September with purplish rose flowers, 3-4 cm (1.25-1.6 inches) long, with a bright yellow, open throat spotted with red. Recent molecular studies have shown that all available plants of this species in cultivation are probably of hybrid origin, with *A. longiflora* as one of the parents. (skinneri = named in honor of George Skinner, a British orchidologist of the 19th century)

Achimenes misera grown by M. Evans (photo by J. Evans)

Achimenes woodii (photo from the Wiehler collection)

Achimenes warszewicziana (photo from the Wiehler collection)

Achimenes obscura growing *in situ* in Mexico
Moore & Bunting #8739 (photo courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution)

Achimenes occidentalis (photo from the Wiehler collection)

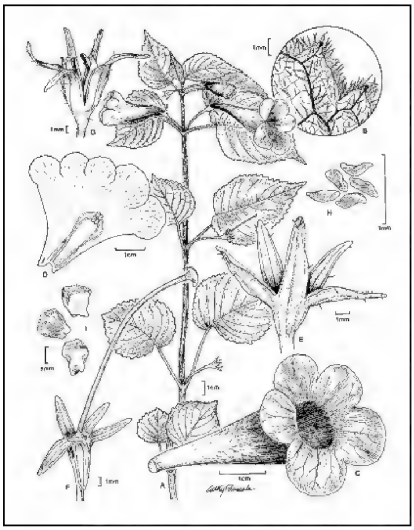
Achimenes candida (grown by Bill Price; photo by Dale Martens)

Achimenes warszewicziana (Regel) H.E. Moore 1962. *Baileya* 10: 45.

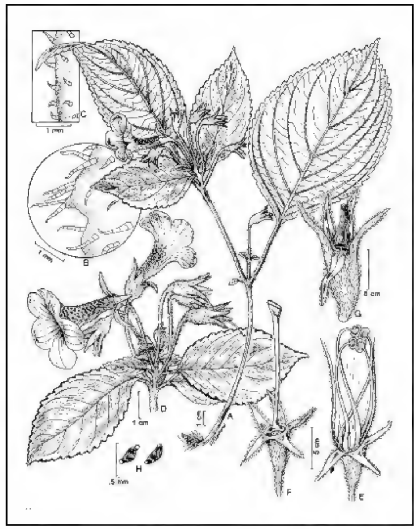
Found in Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, this species has stems to 30 cm (1 foot) long which are hairy and sticky to the touch. The leaves are opposite and bright green. The flowers are single in axils; the corollas white with the limb segments reflexed. The tube is yellow-brown with large maroon dots. Similar to *A. misera*, it is distinguished by the spots and 2 instead of 3 indentations on the underside of the corolla tube. (warszewicziana = named in honor of Joseph Warszewicz, a Lithuanian-born gardener and plant collector of the mid-19th century)

Achimenes woodii C.V. Morton 1962. *Baileya* 10: 49.

Endemic to Mexico, this species has trailing stems to 30 cm (1 foot) and bears leaves in pairs. The flowers are single or up to 4 on an axillary peduncle that is very short. The corolla tube is grayish purple outside, deep yellow inside with bright red dots with a few purple spots emerging on the upper two lobes of the white corolla. (woodii = named in honor of Harvard botanist Carroll Wood who collected this species in Mexico with Moore)



Achimenes hintoniana
Illustration from Novon,
Vol. 12, No. 3, 383. 2002.



Achimenes nayaritensis
Illustration from Opera Botanica,
92: 226. 1987

Cover Photographs:

Achimenes admirabilis
grown by Maryjane Evans
(photo by John Evans)

Achimenes flava grown at
the Smithsonian greenhouses
(photo by Leslie Brothers)

Achimenes glabrata
grown by Mike Kartuz
(photo by Bob Stewart)

Achimenes longiflora
grown by Maryjane Evans
(photo by John Evans)

Achimenes Hybrids

Hundreds of Achimenes cultivars have been created over the past few centuries and many are listed in the new 2008 Achimenes Register (available from The Gesneriad Society Publications – see page 47). This list of over 120 varieties represents those that are currently available from just two of our journal's advertisers (in addition to many of the species) … so **support our advertisers** and order some to grow this season. Just follow the suggestions of our writers and you will be successful in growing them.

'Adelaide'
'Ambroise Verschaffelt'
'Andersoni'
'Annie Belle'
'Apple Blossom'
'Apricot Glow'
'Belinda'
'Bernice'
'Blue Bird'
'Blue David'
'Blue John'
'Blue Monarch'
'Blue Moon'
'Blueberry Ripple'
'Boy David'
'Bright Jewel'
'Brilliant'
'Caligula'
'Camille Brozzoni'
'Cardinal Velvet'
'Cascade Cockade'
'Cascade Fairy Pink'
'Cattleya'
'Charm'
'Choc Hill Blue'
'Clouded Yellow'
'Coral Cameo'
'Coral Sunset'
'Cornell Favorite'
'Cupido'
'Desiree'
'Donna'
'Dot'
'Double Picotee Rose'
'Earl Konig'
'Elke'
'Emma Lawn'
'English Waltz'
'Evening Glow'
'Fashionable Night'
'Flamboyant'
'Flamenco'
'Fritz Michelssen'
'Gemini'
'Glory'
'Grape Wine'
'Habenara'
'Harveyi'
'India'
'Jennifer Goode'
'Jewel Glow'
'Jewell Pink'
'Jubilee Gem'
'Just Divine'
'Kim Blue'
'Lavender Fancy'
'Lavender Lady'
'Lilac'
'Lisa'
'Luneberg'
'Mme. Geheune'
'Mair's White'
'Marcia'
'Margarita'
'Mauve Delight'
'Menuette'
'Moonstone'
'Moss Agate'
'Mozelle'
'National Velvet'
'Old Rose Pink'
'Orange Queen'
'Orange Spectacular'
'Paint Box'
'Painted Lady'
'Panic Pink'
'Paul Arnold'
'Peach Blossom'
'Peach Glow'
'Pearly Gray'
'Pearly Queen'
'Pendant Blue'
'Pendant Purple'
'Pink Double'
'Platinum'
'Primadonna'
'Purple King'
'Purple Queen'
'Purple Triumph'
'Queen of Sheba'
'Rainbow Warrior'
'Red Elfe'
'Red Giant'
'Rose Dream'
'Rosy Doll'
'Rosy Frost'
'Rosy Red'
'Rumplestilzschen'
'Santa Claus'
'Schneewittchen'
'Stan's Delight'
'Summer Festival'
'Summer Sunset'
'Sunburst'
'Tango'
'Tarantella'
'Tetra Dazzler'
'Tetra India'
'Tetra Klaus Neubener'
'Tetra Meiner Porzellan'
'Tetra Orange Glow'
'Tetra Orange Star'
'Tetra Rosamunde'
'Tetra Verschaffelt'
'Tiger Eye'
'Tiny Blue'
'Topsy'
'Tracey Thornley'
'Viola Michelssen'
'Violet Night'
'Vivid'
'Wetterlow's Triumph'
'Yellow Beauty'

GESNERIADS
INDEX 2007

Volume 57 **Numbers 1–4**

Compiled by Judy Becker

Issue is indicated first, followed by a colon, and then page number(s)
Plant illustrations are indicated by an asterisk (*)

Genus + species / hybrid:

Achimenes, 2: 32, 38, 39, 40*-41; 3: 14, 31, 34; 4: 27, 32-33*
A. cettoana, 3: 22-23
A. dulcis, 3: 33*
A. erecta, 1: 13, 15
A. grandiflora, 3: 25
A. 'Honey Gold', 4: 30
A. longiflora, 3: 23
Aeschynanthus, 1: 47; 2: 15, 32, 37-38, 45; 3: 31, 34; 4: 27, 39
A. batesii, 4: 42
A. burttii, 4: 42-43*
A. lobaticalyx, 4: 42-43*
A. longiflorus, 2: 53*, back cover*
A. species, 1: 47, 49*-50
Agalmyla, 1: 48; 3: 51-53
A. chorisepala, 3: 53*
A. parasitica, 3: 52-53*
Alloplectus, 1: 42; 3: 49
A. carpishensis, 1: 43
A. cristatus, 2: 47
A. hispidus, 1: 42
A. inflatus, 1: 43-44*
A. oblongicalyx, 1: 43
A. serpens, 1: 43
A. weirii, 1: 43
Alsobia, 2: 38
A. punctata, 1: 13
Amalophyllon parviflorum, 1: 19
A. rupestre, 1: 19
A. species RM2006, 1: 17*, 18-20*, 21; 4: 12, 20*, 30
Ancylostemon, 4: 44
Anodiscus, 1: 45
Arctocalyx, 3: 12, 14, 22
A. endlicheriana, 3: 12, 17*
A. insignis, 3: 12
A. obscurus, 3: 12
Bellonia, 1: 44
B. aspera, 2: 45, 47
B. spinosa, 2: 47
Besleria cristata, 2: 47
B. insignis, 3: 12
B. lutea, 2: 47
B. melittifolia, 2: 47
Briggsia, 4: 44
Briggsiopsis, 4: 44
Capanea, 1: 44, 45; 3: 49
Chirita, 2: 32, 34, 38, 39; 3: 4, 31; 4: 10, 14, 26-27, 30, 32, 44
C. adenonema, 4: 43
C. asperifolia, 1: 47, 49-50; 4: 43
C. blumei var. *cordifolia*, 4: 43
C. brassicoides 'Marble Leaf', 2: 35; 4: 24*-25
C. collection, 4: 17*
C. 'Deco', 4: 30
C. dissimilis, 4: 43
C. eburnea, 3: 28
C. hybrids, 4: 14, 30
C. leuserensis, 4: 43
C. linearifolia, 2: 21*
C. lutea, 3: 28-29*
C. 'Nemesis', 2: 13, 42*
C. neoforbesii, 4: 43
C. 'Nimbus', 2: 13, 42*
C. 'Piccolo', 2: 13, 42-43
C. praeterita, 4: 43
C. sinensis, 2: 13
C. 'Souvenir', 2: 13, 42-43
C. speciosa, 3: 4
C. tenuipes, 4: 43
C. tobaensis, 4: 43
C. 'Vertigo', 2: 13, 42-43
Chiritopsis, 3: 28
Chrysothemis, 3: 35; 4: 10
Codonanthe, 1: 13; 2: 15; 3: 14
Columnea, 1: 13, 42; 2: 15, 22, 38, 39; 3: 25, 31, 34; 4: 10, 14, 27, 39
C. anisophylla, 2: 19-20*
C. canarina, 1: 43
C. coronata, 1: 42-43*
C. coronocrypta, 1: 42
C. ericae, 4: 24*
C. flaccida, 3: 20
C. 'Frosty Hills', 4: 35-36*
C. hirsuta, 4: 30
C. lariensis, 1: 43-44*
C. microcalyx, 2: 24*; 3: 20
C. minor, 2: 24*
C. minutiflora, 4: 17*
C. pedunculata, 1: 42
C. queremalensis, 1: 42
C. scandens, 2: 47
C. schiedeana, 3: 23, 25, 27
C. tulae var. *tomentulosa*, 3: 20

Conandron, 2: 32
Craniolaria fruticosa, 2: 47
Crantzia, 1: 42
C. cristata, 2: 47
Cyrtandra barbata, 4: 42
C. chrysea, 3: 28
C. coccinea, 1: 48, 50
C. cupulata, 4: 42
C. cupulata var. *minor*, 4: 42
C. dasymallos, 3: 28
C. decipiens, 3: 28
C. dispar, 4: 42
C. eximia, 3: 28
C. falcata, 4: 42
C. fasciata, 4: 42
C. gimlettei, 4: 42
C. gorontaloensis, 4: 42
C. insignis, 1: 48, 50
C. kostermansii, 3: 28
C. lanata, 3: 28
C. lanceolata, 4: 42
C. luteiflora, 4: 42
C. nemorosa, 1: 48, 50
C. nibongensis, 3: 28
C. oblongifolia, 1: 50
C. patula, 4: 42
C. pendula, 4: 42
C. picta, 1: 48, 50
C. purpurea, 4: 42
C. roseiflora, 4: 42
C. rotundifolia, 4: 42
C. serratifolia, 4: 42
C. species, 1: 47-49*-50
C. stonei, 4: 42
C. suffruticosa, 4: 42
C. sulcata, 1: 48, 50
C. tenuicarpa, 4: 42
C. villifructus, 3: 28
C. wallichii, 4: 42

Diastema, 1: 44; 2: 13; 3: 28
D. species, 4: 30
D. vexans, 1: 44
Didymocarpus asperifolius, 1: 49
D. barbatus, 1: 47
Dolicholoma, 3: 28
Drymonia, 1: 42; 3: 31; 4: 27
D. conchocalyx, 1: 43; 3: 20
D. glandulosa, 1: 43
D. mortoniana, 1: 43
D. strigosa, 2: 24*

Episcia, 2: 32, 34, 37-38, 39; 3: 4; 4: 32-33, 39, 41
E. 'Blue Mist', 3: 42-43*
E. cupreata, 1: 18
E. hybrids, 4: 30, 39
E. melittifolia, 2: 47
E. 'Pink Smoke' seedlings, 4: 12, 30
E. 'Sun Gold', 4: 32
E. 'War Paint', 4: 40*
Eucodonia, 2: 32
E. 'Pat's Pet Parrot', 3: 42-43*
E. 'Pat's Pet Penguin', 3: 42, 44*
E. 'Pat's Pet Toucan', 3: 42, 44

Gesneria acaulis, 2: 48
G. cuneifolia 'Quebradillas', 2: 20*, 22
G. fruticosa, 2: 47
G. humilis, 2: 48-49*
G. rupincola, 2: 4-5
G. tomentosa, 2: 46, 48
Glossoloma, 1: 42
G. carpishensis, 1: 43
G. oblongicalyx, 1: 43
G. serpens, 1: 43
Gloxinella, 1: 45; 3: 49
G. lindeniana, 1: 45
Gloxinia, 1: 44, 45; 3: 49; 4: 32
G. dodsonii, 1: 44
G. erinoides, 1: 45
G. lindeniana, 1: 44
G. perennis, 1: 13; 2: 48
G. racemosa, 1: 44
G. xanthophylla, 1: 45
Gloxiniopsis, 1: 45; 3: 49
G. racemosa, 1: 45
Goyazia, 1: 44

Haberlea, 3: 33*
Hemiboea cavaleriei, 3: 28
H. rubribracteata, 3: 28-29*
Henckelia species, 4: 24*-25
Hippodamia, 3: 12-14, 22

Koellikeria, 1: 45
Kohleria, 1: 44, 45; 2: 34, 38, 39, 41; 3: 23, 31; 4: 32
K. affinis, 1: 45
K. 'Black Diamonds', 2: 37*
K. 'Dark Velvet', 4: 34
K. 'Jester', 4: 32
K. 'Lychee Temptation', 2: 37*, 39
K. 'Monte's Friendship', 1: front cover*, 5
K. 'Peridot's Kitlope', 4: front cover*, 3, 13, 20*, 34-35
K. schiedeana, 3: 23
K. spicata, 3: 4, 23, 25
K. 'Tane', 4: 34
K. tigridia, 1: 45

Lagarosolen, 3: 29
Lembocarpus, 3: 51
Loxostigma, 4: 44
L. giffithii, 2: front cover*, 3, 6
Lysionotus, 2: 32; 4: 44

Mandirola, 3: 49
M. rupestris, 1: 45
Martynia perennis, 2: 46, 48

Monopyle, 1: 44; 3: 14
Moussonia deppeana, 3: 23, 25-26
M. hirsutissima, 3: 22-23, 25-26
M. papillosa, 3: 23, 25-26

Nautilocalyx, 1: 43
N. melittifolius, 2: 47
N. species, 4: 13, 17*
Nematanthus, 1: 42; 2: 32, 45; 3: 31, 34; 4: 27, 39
N. albus, 1: 42
N. 'Champagne', 2: 15
N. kautskyi, 1: 42
N. punctatus, 1: 42-43*
N. pycnophyllus, 1: 42
N. wiehleri, 1: 42
Niphaea parviflora, 1: 19
Nomopyle dodsonii, 1: 45
N. peruviana, 1: 45

Opithandra, 2: 32
Oreocharis, 4: 44

Paliavana, 3:14
Paraboea, 4: 44
P. crassifolia, 3: 30
P. guilinensis, 3: 30
Paradrymonia bullata, 1: 43
P. densa, 1: 39-40*-41
Paralagarosolen, 3: 49
P. fangianum, 3: 29*
Pearcea, 1: 44
Petrocosmea, 2: 22, 38; 4: 10, 30, 44
P. minor, 4: 20*
P. species "Yubetai", 4: 30
Pheidonocarpa, 1: 44
Phinaea, 1: 13, 19, 44; 2: 13; 3: 14
P. parviflora, 1: 19
P. species, 1: 13, 19

Ramonda myconii, 2: 45, 48
Raphiocarpus, 4: 44
Rhabdothamnopsis, 4: 44
Rhytidophyllum tomentosum, 2: 48

Saintpaulia, 1: 18; 2: 12-13, 32, 34-35, 38, 39, 40-41; 3: 34, 39; 4: 32, 39-40*-41
S. 'Blue Rabbit', 2: 41
S. 'Botanica', 1: 36-37*-38; 4: 32
S. ionantha hybrids, 4: 39-40*-41
S. 'Raluca', 2: 41
S. 'Rose-Marie', 2: 41
S. 'Vertige', 2: 41
Seemannia, 2: 32; 3: 49
Sinningia, 1: 4; 2: 13, 32, 34, 38, 39, 41, 45; 3: 14, 34, 36*; 4: 27, 30
S. defoliata, 4: 21*, 36*, 37-38
S. iarae, 3: 36
S. 'Isabelle' × 'Ozark Coral Freckles', 2: 40*
S. 'Kevin Garnett', 4: 30
S. 'Ozark Scentimental Journey', 4: 21*
S. pusilla 'White Sprite', 3: 6
S. species, 4: 30
S. species "Rio das Pedras", 3: 6
S. speciosa, 2: 32, 34, 38, 39, 41; 3: 34-35; 4: 39-40*-41
S. speciosa 'Saltao', 3: 6
S. 'Spellbound', 2: 42, 43*, 44; 4: 21*
S. tuberosa, 3: 51
S. tubiflora, 3: 35
S. warmingii, 3: 35
S. 'Wood Nymph', 2: 36*
Smithiantha, 2: 13; 3: 31
S. multiflora, 3: 22, 25
S. 'Pat's Pet Antelope', 3: 42, 45
S. 'Pat's Pet Armadillo', 3: 42, 45
S. 'Pat's Pet Chinchilla', 3: 42, 45*
S. 'Pat's Pet Chipmunk', 3: 42, 46
S. 'Pat's Pet Cougar', 3: 42, 45*-46
S. 'Pat's Pet Deer', 4: 45
S. 'Pat's Pet Donkey', 4: 45
S. 'Pat's Pet Ferret', 4: 45-46*
S. 'Pat's Pet Fox', 4: 45-46
S. 'Pat's Pet Gazelle', 4: 45-47*
S. 'Pat's Pet Giraffe', 4: 45-46
S. 'Pat's Pet Impala', 4: 45-47
S. 'Pat's Pet Jaguar', 4: 45, 47
S. 'Pat's Pet Jerboa', 4: 45, 47
S. 'Pat's Pet Lion', 4: 45-46*-47
S. 'Pat's Pet Llama', 4: 45, 48
S. 'Pat's Pet Mandrill', 4: 45, 48*
S. 'Pat's Pet Oryx', 4: 45, 48
S. 'Pat's Pet Otter', 4: 45, 47*-48
S. 'Pat's Pet Squirrel', 4: 45, 49
S. 'Pat's Pet Walrus', 4: 45, 49
×*Smithicodonia* 'Pat's Pet Mockingbird', 3: 42, 44*
×*S.* 'Pat's Pet Swan', 3: 42, 44-45
Solenophora abietorum, 3: 13-15, 18
S. calycosa, 3: front cover*, 3, 12-17*-18, 20-21*, 24*, back cover*
S. calycosa subsp. *australis*, 3: 13, 15, 18
S. calycosa subsp. *calycosa*, 3: 15, 18
S. calycosa subsp. *purpurascens*, 3: 15, 18
S. chiapasensis, 3: 14-15, 18
S. coccinea, 3: 12-14, 16, 22-24*, 25
S. erubescens, 3: 14-15, 18, 27*
S. glomerata, 3: 14, 16
S. insignis, 3: 12, 14, 16-17*, 23-24*-26
S. maculata, 3: 14, 16
S. modesta, 3: 13-15, 18
S. obliqua, 3: 15
S. obscura, 3: 14-15, 18, 23, 25-27*
S. pirana, 3: 14, 16
S. "Popoluta", 3: 23
S. purpusii, 3: 14-16
S. schleehaufii, 3: 13-16
S. toucana, 3: 14, 16, 18

S. tuerckheimiana, 3: 14-15, 18
S. tuxtlensis, 3: 13-15, 18, 20-21*, 23, 25
S. wilsonii, 3: 15
Sphaerorrhiza, 1: 45; 3: 49
S. burchellii, 1: 45
S. sarmentiana, 1: 45
Stauranthera coerulea, 1: 47, 50
Streptocarpus, 2: 13, 32, 34, 39, 45; 3: 34, 38, 51; 4: 10, 15, 26-27, 30, 32
S. 'Aurora', 2: 42, 44
S. 'Big Yolk', 2: 33*
S. caeruleus, 3: 39
S. candidus, 3: 39, 41
S. 'Charlotte', 2: 33*
S. 'Crimson Rouge', 2: 33*
S. (*cyaneus* × *vandeleurii*) × *caeruleus*, 3: 41
S. davyi, 3: 39
S. dunnii, 2: 21*, 23
S. 'Emily', 2: 33*
S. eylesii, 3: 41
S. fanniniae, 3: 38, 41
S. fasciatus, 3: 41
S. 'Fernwood's Minuet', 4: 20*
S. 'Fernwood's Silhouette', 4: 12
S. 'Fleishles Roulette', 4: 30
S. floribundus, 3: 41
S. floribundus × *dunnii*, 3: 39
S. formosus, 3: 39, 41
S. formosus × *vandeleurii*, 3: 39
S. gardenii, 4: 44
S. grandis × *saundersii*, 3: 41
S. 'Heaven Scent', 2: 34
S. hybrids, 4: 30
S. 'Iced Texas Twilight', 2: 34
S. 'Jaco's Gem', 1: 36-37*; 3: 40*, 42
S. johannis, 3: 41
S. kentaniensis, 2: 32
S. 'Kimi', 2: 33*
S. 'Lemon Curd', 2: 16, 32-33*, 36
S. 'Lemon Frills', 2: 33*
S. 'Lilac Lady', 3: 42*-43
S. lilliputana, 3: 38- 40*-41; 4: 43-44
S. longiflorus, 3: 39
S. makabengensis, 3: 39
S. meyeri, 3: 38
S. molweniensis × *eylesii*, 3: 41
S. montigena, 3: 39
S. montigena × *fasciatus*, 3: 39
S. parviflorus, 3: 38
S. parviflorus × *candidus*, 3: 39
S. 'Pat's Pet Brimstone', 4: 45, 49
S. 'Pat's Pet Monarch', 4: 45, 48*-49
S. 'Persephone', 2: 42-43*-44
S. porphyrostachys × *grandis*, 3: 41
S. rexii × *johannis*, 3: 39
S. 'Royal Montreal', 3: 42*-43
S. saxorum variegated, 4: 15, 30
S. 'Shizuka', 4: 30
S. vandeleurii, 3: 38, 41
S. 'Yulia', 2: 36*

Vanhouttea brueggeri, 1: 52*-53, back cover*
V. calcarata, 1: 53
V. lanata, 1: 53
V. pendula, 1: 53
Verbascum myconii, 2: 45-46, 48

Wentsaiboea renifolia, 3: 28-29*
Whytockia, 4: 44

Author:

Aman, M., 2: 37-38
Becker, J., 2: 27-31, 42-47; 4: 45-49
Boggan, J., 1: 13-14, 19, 42-45; 3: 28-30; 4: 42-44
Bonner, C., 1: 4-5; 2: 4-6; 3: 4-5
Brigham, A., 4: 6
Bylund, M., 3: 31-32
Coulson, R., 3: 34-37
Denham, M., 3: 22-27
Dewell, A., 4: 34-35
Ertelt, J., 3: 20-21
Farrice, G. & C. Ripps, 1: 6-11, 46; 2: 9-1, 25; 3: 6-11, 47; 4: 6-9, 51
Fontes, R., 2: 50-51
Hirose, K., 2: 32-33
Hoover, S. et al, 1: 47-51
Kalgin, V., 2: 33-36
Klintberg, L., 2: 45-49
LaVergne, A., 1: 52-53
Leung, L., 2: 39
Maciejewski, S., 1: 39-41
Marietti, C., 4: 10-16
Martinez, J., 4: 35-36
Mavity-Hudson, J., 1: 12; 4: 5
Martens, D., 1: 21, 36-38
Mink, A., 1: 22; 2: 13-15
Myhr, R., 1: 13-20; 2: 18-23
Price, B., 1: 36; 4: 36-37
Richter, A., 4: 32-33
Ripps, C. & G. Farrice, 1: 6-11, 46; 2: 9-11, 25; 3: 6-11, 47; 4: 6-9, 51
Saliba, S., 2: 40-41
Schneider, M., 4: 26-28
Shalit, P., 4: 4-5, 36-38
Stewart, B., 3: 20
Susi, P., 1: 35; 2: 6, 12-13, 16; 4: 29, 30-31
Truter, J., 3: 38-41
Weber, A., 3: 48-53
Weber, A. & A. Weissenhofer, 3: 12-19
Weissenhofer, A. & A. Weber, 3: 12-19
Wong, W., 4: 39-41

Subject / Title

Awards of Appreciation, 4: 26-28
Best Vanhoutteas, 1: 52-53
Botanical Exploration for Gesneriaceae in Indonesia II, 1: 47-51
Botanical Review #32, 1: 42-45
Botanical Review #33, 3: 28-30
Botanical Review #34, 4: 42-44
Convention 2006 Questionnaire Results, 1: 35
Convention Board Review, 4: 6
Convention Tote Bag, 2: 15
Cool Gesneriads in Hot Miami Gesneriad Society Convention 2007, 4: 10-16
Did Linnaeus Ever See a Gesneriad?, 2: 45-49
Donations, 2: 8; 4: 29
Encountering Solenophora in Panama, 3: 20-21
Gesneriad Boom in Russia, 2: 33-36
Gesneriad Hunting in Belize, 1: 13-20
Gesneriad Register, 3: 42-47; 4: 45-49
Gesneriad Scene in Singapore, 4: 39-41
Gesneriad Society Convention 2006 Questionnaire Results, 1: 35
Gesneriad Society Convention 2007, 1: 22, 23-27, 28-34; 2: 12-13, 13-16
Gesneriad Society Convention 2007, Convention Auction, 2: 16
Gesneriad Society Convention 2007, Convention Board Review, 4: 6
Gesneriad Society Convention 2007, Flower Show Awards, 4: 17-25
Gesneriad Society Convention 2007, Flower Show Schedule, 1: 28-31, 34
Gesneriad Society, Inc., Call for 2007 Annual Board of Directors Meeting, 2: 7
Gesneriad Society, Inc., Call for 2007 Annual Membership Meeting, 2: 7
Gesneriad Society, Inc. Financial Statement 2006, 2: 50-51
Gesneriad Society, Inc. Nominating Committee Report, 2: 7
Gesneriad Society Publications, 2: 52; 3: 5
Gesneriads in Australia, 3: 34-37
Gesneriads in Brunei, 2: 38
Growing *Columnea* 'Frosty Hills', 4: 35-36
Growing Gesneriads in Germany, 4: 32-33
Growing Gesneriads in Hong Kong, 2: 39
Growing Gesneriads in Japan, 2: 32-33
Growing Gesneriads in Romania, 2: 40-41
Growing Gesneriads in Umeå, Sweden, 3: 31-32
Growing *Sinningia defoliata*, 4: 36-38
Growing *Streptocarpus* 'Jaco's Gem', 1-36
Hints on Growing Solenophora, 3: 20
Hot Auction in Cool Miami, 4: 30-31
Hot Gesneriads in Cool Miami, 1: 22
Hot Topics for Cool Miami, 2: 12-13
How I Grow *Sinningia defoliata*, 4: 36-37
Hybrids Seed List Additions, 1: 46, 3: 47
Index 2006, 2: 27-31
My Journey with a Very Special Kohleria, 4: 34-35
New and Updated Online Contributions from Vienna on Gesneriaceae, 3: 48-53
New Web Site, 1: 12; 4: 5
Photographing Gesneriads, 2: 18-23
Playing with Streptocarpus in South Africa, 3: 38-41
President's Message, 1: 4-5; 2: 4-6; 3: 4-5; 4: 4-5
Propagation and Cultivation of *Amalophyllon* species RM2006, 1: 21
Saintpaulia 'Botanica': Beast or Beauty, 1: 36-38
Searches for *Solenophora* in Mexico, 3: 22-27
Seed Fund, 1: 6-11, 46; 2: 9-1, 25; 3: 6-11, 47; 4: 6-9, 51
Slide Programs, 2: 17
Society Web Site Update, 4: 5
Solenophora: a Little Known Genus of Central American Gesneriaceae, 3: 12-19
Tour of Tours – Convention 2007, 2: 13-15

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Growing Achimenes

Judy Becker <jbecker@mohawk.net>
Salisbury, Connecticut, USA

In the mid 1960's my parents became interested in gesneriads and raised some Achimenes from Park's Mixed Special seed. All of them were the same – purple. I ended up with a pot-full growing reasonably well, considering the haphazard attention to watering, on a windowsill of a New Brunswick, New Jersey, apartment. A greater hazard was the resident cat who liked the way the stems responded to her paws.

The scaly rhizomes of Achimenes are actually condensed stems, each scale being a modified leaf. This modification enables them to survive dry conditions during part of the year. Rhizomes vary in size and shape from small rounded ones to those more than an inch long. The usual clues for the plants to go into dormancy are shorter day length or drying out. If they dry too much in the summer, they may go dormant before forming rhizomes.

The rhizomes can be planted as early as February/March or as late as the end of June, depending on growing conditions. Late planting will delay bloom until the end of the summer. My greenhouse experiences a space shortage in April and May when 30 large ivy geraniums take up considerable space on the hanging racks. Consequently, mid May is usually the earliest that I plant the rhizomes. This year I did a very late planting of a couple of varieties, hoping to have plants in bloom for the New England Gesneriad Show the end of September. My basket of *Achimenes* 'Rosy Frost' was beautifully in bud.

If grown outside, Achimenes will do better when night temperatures are above 55-60°F (13-16°C). Because our summers used to occasionally dip into the 40's°F (4-9°C) at night in August, the stock baskets of Achimenes stay in the greenhouse. Recent summers have been warmer and I may try putting extra baskets outside. Several years ago, some were started in March but they didn't bloom until the end of June, only a few weeks ahead of their normal blooming in July.

Over the course of almost 40 years, I've used a variety of mixes starting with the old Cornell mix, Pro-Mix with extra perlite, Metro Mix with added perlite, or any other light and porous mixture. Adding a wetting agent such as Aqua-gro will help a peat-based mix hold more moisture, certainly a help on hot summer days. The drawback comes when it is cold and damp in the early stages of growth so it may take too long for the mix to dry out.

Fill the container to within 1 inch (2.5 cm) of the top. Add rhizomes, trying to space them fairly evenly. They can be horizontal or vertical, and can be divided, even down to individual scales, something I have never tried. For an 8" (20 cm) hanging basket, about 24 rhizomes or pieces of rhizomes will make a full basket. Cover them with potting soil and water in. Keep the container warm (above 60°F or 16°C) and in a well-lit area. Bottom heat may encourage quicker growth. Water only as pots dry out until new growth starts. Then water and feed on a regular basis. In tropical areas, Achimenes can be planted in the ground.

Try to use tempered water (close to room temperature) as some varieties may spot if cold water is used. Any reasonably balanced houseplant fertilizer

can be used, depending on the mix. With a constant feed program, 1/4 to 1/2 tsp/gal is appropriate. By mid summer, baskets can require watering on a daily basis.

Bright filtered light will promote more compact growth and better flowering. Avoid very breezy areas as they can damage the plants in addition to drying them faster.

Achimenes can be propagated from stem cuttings, which will also encourage branching of the stems. By fall as the plants finish blooming, gradually withhold water to encourage them to go dormant. When top growth has died and the soil is dry, rhizomes can be harvested. Store them in small polyethylene bags with some vermiculite in a cool area until ready to plant in the spring. If there is any sign of condensation in the bags, open them up to avoid rotting the rhizomes. By March some of the rhizomes are sprouting, but it doesn't seem to hurt them to wait for later planting.

Achimenes baskets at the Lauray greenhouses of Judy Becker
(photo by John Beaulieu)

Achimenes 'Campus Favorite'
(grown by Judy Becker;
photo by John Beaulieu)

Achimenes 'Purple King'
(grown and photographed
by Julie Mavity-Hudson)

Growing Achimenes South of the Mason-Dixon Line

Julie Mavity-Hudson <Julie.Mavity-Hudson@vanderbilt.edu>
Joelton, Tennessee, USA

When I was about 8 years old, we moved to my Dad's hometown of LaFayette, Georgia. I soon discovered my Grandmother "Mammy", Muncie Mavity, and her beautiful flowers. Of course at the time I didn't know that her "monkey-faces" were gesneriads and that someday I would be heavily involved in The Gesneriad Society. All I knew was that in her big washtubs she grew the most beautiful purple flowers I had ever seen. This was saying a lot, since the place we had moved from was Tlalpan, Mexico, which was at quite a high altitude and the temperature varied from about 65°F to 75°F (18° to 24°C) year round. There we lived in a beautiful compound full of flowers and with a full-time gardener named Pedro. (I have to admit, though that Pedro hated my sisters and me for picking his flowers and calling him *perro* [dog], and he often chased us with his water hose, but I still loved the flowers.) Mammy's Achimenes (probably *A.* 'Purple King') were beautifully grown, and I have been trying to match them with limited success ever since. Of course, there was no one like Mammy, who in addition to being an amazing person was highly intelligent and wise far beyond her 3rd grade education. She also grew amazing African Violets and was my introduction to that genus as well.

My Grandmother and many of her friends grew Achimenes as washtub plants. She would punch holes in the bottom of a large washtub and fill it with good woods dirt, plant many rhizomes, and then set it out on the porch in the spring. Before long, the entire tub would be full of plants completely covered with big purple flowers.

I don't grow my Achimenes in exactly the same way (though perhaps I should), but in a very similar manner with a little modernization. I watch for the rhizomes to sprout in the spring, and when they do, I try to plant them within a few weeks if possible – but I have to keep in mind that I can't put them outside until the weather is warm and there is no chance of frost. I use a light, soilless mix and plant 6-10 rhizomes in a 6- or 8-inch (15-20 cm) pot, laying them flat on the soil and covering them with around 1/4 inch, or a little more, of soil. If they decided to grow too early, I leave most of the growing shoot under the soil just allowing the tip of the growing plant to show above the surface. I water them well and place them outside on a table which receives some morning sun. As they begin growing, I pinch the tips once they have 2 or 3 sets of leaves. This makes for bushier plants and more flowers, though it can delay them somewhat.

The biggest problem with growing Achimenes outside is keeping them watered. If they dry out, even once, they never really do well for the rest of the summer, and may even try to go dormant. This past summer was the driest year on record for middle Tennessee, and I really had to stay on top of it, watering them almost every day. I found that all the attention I was forced to give them gave me my best crop in years, and perhaps I learned a lesson in growing: to really pay attention to the watering needs of my plants.

I found that I didn't get some plants into large enough pots when I planted them, and because they were growing so fast, they were drying out faster than I could water them. I put saucers under these plants and filled them with water when I watered the rest of my plants before leaving for work.

Achimenes are fast growers and need regular fertilizer. Because of summer rains and watering with a garden hose, fertilizer is often either not applied regularly enough or at all, and that can be a real problem. I have found using time-release fertilizer is the answer for me. I just use it at the rate it says on the bottle for indoor plants and it works fine. I usually apply it twice during the growing season.

Achimenes are very easy to grow from cuttings during their growing season, so I often take cuttings, either to grow more for myself or to share with my friends.

When fall rolls around, I start watering less often, allowing the plants to wilt a bit before watering. They start going dormant with this treatment. This year the rains came about the time I needed to start drying them out, so I dragged them up onto the porch which seems to have worked okay as there appear to be rhizomes in all the pots I have looked in so far. A light frost will also not hurt the rhizomes, and in some places they are hardy planted in the ground. I have even had them live through the winter here in middle Tennessee a few times when we have had mild winters, and I imagine with some mulching, they would probably make it through pretty reliably at least from mid-Georgia south. I would definitely bring in some rhizomes for the winter, though, just in case.

Once the foliage has died down, there are two ways the rhizomes can be carried through. They can be left in the pot and placed in a closet or any frost-proof place out of the way, even under a greenhouse bench, and not watered other than maybe once a little sprinkle (though I never do). The alternative is to harvest the rhizomes and drop them (without any soil or other matter) into zip-lock bags, seal them, label them and stick them in a cabinet. I don't recommend putting moist soil, moss or anything else in the bag; at least for me, that is just asking for mold or rot.

Some of the hybrids that I grow regularly are *Achimenes* 'Purple King' (of course!), as well as *A.* 'Viola', 'Ambroise Verschaffelt', 'Dot', 'Glory', 'Flamingo', 'Early Arnold', 'Peach Glow', and the two species *A. pedunculata* and *A. antirrhina*. I grow both *Achimenes* 'Desiree' and *A. erecta* 'Tiny Red' indoors under lights; the latter I grow from seed as well.

There seems to be a resurgence of interest in new hybrids in Europe, and hopefully some of them will start reaching us here in the southern United States soon. I know I look forward to it.

I hope all you southerners will be inspired to try growing Achimenes on your porch. Maybe this year I will get me a big washtub ….

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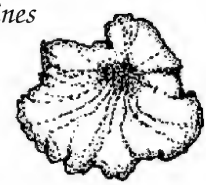

Achimenes 'Glory' grown by Bill Price
(photo by Bob Stewart at the 2005 AGGS Convention)

Achimenes heterophylla (grown outdoors in Joelton, Tennessee
and photographed by Julie Mavity-Hudson)

Achimenes and other plants growing in JoAnna Behl's
lean-to greenhouse in Palo Alto, California

Achimenes baskets growing at Kartuz Greenhouses
in Vista, California (photo by Mike Kartuz)

How I Grow Achimenes

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Vancouver, BC, Canada

Although Achimenes are often only thought of as outdoor summer basket plants for shady areas, they can be grown to become lovely show plants if given a bit of extra care. This is how I grow *Achimenes* and its closely related intergeneric hybrids (with the genus *Smithiantha*), ×*Achimenantha*.

This genus of rhizomatous gesneriads tends to have a very predictable growth cycle consisting of active growing and flowering throughout the late spring and summer. In early fall, flowering stops, and a complete dormancy period occurs from late fall to early spring. Rhizomes are produced during summer and into fall, and then stay dormant until the following spring.

In order to produce a show plant, one must have several rhizomes. This may take a couple seasons to obtain from newly acquired varieties.

In addition to just letting the plant multiply each season on its own, this process can be speeded along by several methods. First of all, the new rhizome can be cut into several small pieces before planting which results in several plants being produced.

Another method is to gently shred the rhizome into individual scales, which then can be "sown" onto a pot of mix and lightly stirred into the surface of the mix. After watering, the pot can be placed under lights and kept moist while the new plants develop. This will produce many plants which, after flowering, should produce numerous rhizomes.

Finally, one can also take stem cuttings during the growth cycle to produce new plants which will then mature to flower and produce rhizomes for the next season.

A key factor in rhizome production is keeping the plants well fed and watered. If excess drying occurs too early in the growth cycle, the plant may go dormant prematurely without producing any (or only small) rhizomes.

In terms of storing rhizomes, some growers have good success with harvesting the rhizomes in the fall and storing them in plastic bags where they can easily be observed when they start to break dormancy. Unfortunately, under my conditions, this has resulted in high losses due to rotting or excess drying out.

I have had the best results by leaving them in the pot until early spring when I take the pot apart and harvest the rhizomes. It's a very rewarding task for a gloomy late winter evening to find all these succulent hidden rhizomes and to reflect on what beautiful plants they will soon become.

And now comes the fun part! I use a 5" (13 cm) bulb pan and fill it to about 1" (2.5 cm) from the surface with my soil mix. I use a very open mix of approximately 1/3 each by volume of reconstituted New Zealand sphagnum moss and coarse vermiculite and perlite, to which some bone meal, charcoal and dolomite lime have been added.

Next I arrange 6-8 rhizomes along the outer edge of the pot, horizontally, with the growing or pointed end facing out similar to the numbers on the face of a clock. If I am using pieces of rhizomes, then I don't worry about which end points out. (For example, if I only have 3 long rhizomes, I cut them into 1/4"-1/2" (.5-1.25 cm) pieces and then plant the "new" rhizomes.) I

then arrange 3-4 rhizomes in the center of the pot and fill the pot with mix, firming it gently. After watering, I place it under the lights.

If the rhizomes have started growing when I plant them, I keep on watering the new pot as soon as it dries out. If they were still dormant, I just water once and then again (if no evidence of new growth appears soon) in a few weeks to hopefully stimulate the rhizomes to break dormancy. (If I am late planting the rhizomes and they have produced long growths, I just trim these off, plant the rhizomes, and let them start afresh.)

In my experience, Achimenes tend to grow best with higher light, such as under 4 tubes or right in the middle of a 2-tube shelf. Under these conditions, plants grow more compactly and are more floriferous; a south- or east-facing window works well, too.

The new growth usually appears within a couple of weeks. Once they are about 3" tall, I prune the tips back to only 1 or 2 nodes. This encourages the plant to produce several branches and results in a more "full" appearing pot. Some species and some of the older varieties of Achimenes tend to grow very leggy and will need to be pruned back a second or third time to keep them compact over the season.

At this stage it is crucial to keep the plants consistently watered with regular fertilizing – each week I use my usual 1/4 strength of a variety of commercially available fertilizers. Wicking the pots can certainly ease the burden of watering, and turning the pot regularly is necessary to promote balanced growth.

If you would like an even larger plant, when the 5-inch (12.75 cm) pan has grown for a few months, it can be potted "up" into a 6-inch (15 cm) pot by making a mold of the smaller pot in the larger pot. After filling the new pot with your mix, just slip the plant into the new pot and water it in. Growth should continue without interruption, as there should be little root disturbance.

In late summer as flowering slows down, start watering less. At this time I check for rhizome development by gently un-potting the plant and looking for the new rhizomes that may be poking out to the edge of the mix. When you see this, you can be assured that you will most likely have more than enough rhizomes for the next season. After the top growth gets ratty, just cut it all off and set the pot away for the winter. I just put the pots in trays and store them dry under my light stands. Any cool frost-free area would be fine.

And regarding my outdoor pots of Achimenes, I tend to use 8" bulb pans, and start them as with the 5" pans but with more rhizomes. These I let grow for two seasons before restarting them. This way there are always lots of extra rhizomes to give away!

Some of the varieties I have found that do well are Dale Martens' excellent ×*Achimenantha* hybrids, especially 'Golden Jubilee' (pale pink), 'Texas Polar Bear' (white) and 'Texas Spotted Leopard' (very dark foliage with paler mauve flowers). Other good performers are *Achimenes* 'Inferno' (bright red), 'Glory' (glowing apricot/peach), 'Paul Arnold' (blue) and the very old variety 'Ambroise Verschaffelt' (white with purple veining). Two very nice species are the tiny yellow-flowered *Achimenes flava* and *Achimenes candida* with its scented, small white flowers with spots.

Growing Achimenes under lights results in compact and wonderfully floriferous plants that look beautiful on the light stands and are great for shows. I would encourage everyone to try growing them.

Achimenes 'Peach Blossom'

Achimenes 'Ambroise Verschaffelt

Achimenes 'Blueberry Ripple'

(all grown and photographed by Mike Kartuz)

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Achimenes for Summer Bloom

Michael J. Kartuz <mikekartuz@cox.net>
Vista, California, USA

Achimenes are available in a surprisingly large variety of colors, including many shades of pink, rose, blue, purple, red, white and yellow. There are forms that trail, or grow upright. The tetraploid varieties tend to be sturdier and more compact with larger, more weather-resistant flowers.

Achimenes love warm, humid, summer conditions and are best grown outdoors in a shaded location protected from wind and rain.

Start the small scaly rhizomes, sometimes called tubercles, in early spring. Gentle bottom heat will speed their "germination". It is important not to let Achimenes dry out once they are actively growing. Use a planting mix consisting of two parts peatmoss and one part perlite, or any fast draining potting soil. Feed regularly with a weak solution of liquid fertilizer. A soft pinch (pinch out the growth tips) when plants are a few inches high will encourage branching. Flowering usually begins in June and continues until frost, or late November in a greenhouse.

Continue watering plants into fall and then gradually dry them off and cease watering when foliage starts to turn brown, usually early December. Store rhizomes dry in their pots in a cool, frost-free location. Harvest rhizomes in late January or early February. You will be rewarded with an amazing increase in rhizomes that you can share with your friends.

Pests and diseases are usually not much of a problem, but aphids and mealy bugs may occasionally by found. You might use a general purpose spray, such as Ortho Garden Systemic Spray (Orthene) or granular systemic Marathon, but follow directions carefully! A drench with Ortho Garden Disease Control (Daconil) may help curb rotting of newly planted rhizomes.

It has been my experience that Achimenes are not very suitable for growing under fluorescent lights. They are too big and have high light requirements. However, plants grown from tip cuttings can be managed very close to the lamps.

Most Achimenes are long-day plants and naturally go dormant in the fall. However, there are a few varieties that start flowering in late summer into early winter before going dormant.

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Growing Achimenes in the San Francisco Bay Area

JoAnna Behl <jobehl@earthlink.net>
Palo Alto, California, USA

Achimenes with their abundance of showy flowers were seemingly not to be one of my gesneriad successes until I became the proud owner of a hobby greenhouse in 1993.

Living on the Peninsula, thirty miles south of San Francisco, gives us a wonderfully mild climate with summer temperatures usually in the low 80s°F (27-28°C), and nights down in the 50s°F (10-15°C), with typical humidity around 50 percent. While this makes for very comfortable living, it is not the greatest weather for Achimenes; they seem to prefer the hot humid days and warm nights more often seen in the Southeast and East.

My lean-to greenhouse is against the north/northwest side of my home. While receiving minimal sun in the winter, it is baked in the summer by the high, overhead, mid-day sun and and very hot afternoon sun. Overhead shade cloth controls the overhead brightness, but the northwest corner of the greenhouse gets a real baking.

This turns out to be the ideal spot for my *Achimenes* and ×*Achimenantha* hybrids. They seem to thrive on the heat and bright light, growing compact and floriferous. I believe that higher night temperatures and the extra humidity of the greenhouse further enhance the growing conditions.

Rhizomes are planted in the spring, usually when the first signs of green appear at one end of the rhizomes. Rhizome-to-pot ratios vary from one rhizome to a 2-inch (5 cm) pot, to 20 or so in a 10-inch (25 cm) pot. The rhizomes of most of the *Achimenes* hybrids I grow are from 1/2 to 3/4 inches long (1.25-2 cm).

I prefer to fill a pot nearly full with a rich, well-draining soil that has been fortified with "Osmocote" slow-release fertilizer. (A second dressing of the fertilizer is added in the middle of summer for strongly growing plants.) The rhizomes are first laid horizontally over the surface of the pot. Then I cover them with about 1/2 inch (1.25 cm) of soil.

The plants are lightly watered until growth appears and then, as they really start to grow, the container is set in a saucer of water, 1 to 1.5 inches (2.5 to 4 cm) deep depending on pot size. Water is kept in the saucer throughout the flowering period as these plants use very large amounts of water during their strong peak growing period. Drying them out will often end the flowering period, or at a minimum, decrease the flowering dramatically.

As the flowering period comes to an ends, the amount of water is slowly decreased and the plants are allowed to dry out and go dormant. At this point there are several options: The rhizomes can be left in the dry pot to overwinter, or they can be removed from the pots, and stored dry in plastic bags, to be divided up and repotted in the spring. I usually choose to leave the rhizomes in the pot the first year after planting and let them come up again in the spring. This often gives me a very full, beautiful pot the second year. After the second year, the pot is often overly full of rhizomes and I remove

them from the pot during the winter. I either divide them up into numerous pots, (give some away), and/or plant them in even larger pots for the new season.

Of the various *Achimenes* hybrids I have grown, I especially like *A.* 'Tarantella' with its olive-colored leaves and coral pink flowers, and *A.* 'Purple King' with its huge bright purple flowers.

Patrick Worley's intergeneric cross ×*Achimenantha* 'Inferno' is my favorite *Achimenes* relative of all time. The plants will fill large baskets with dark green foliage and bright red/orange flowers with yellow centers. They will bloom in the cool greenhouse well into December if temperatures are kept at 50°F (10°C) or above. Because of its *Smithiantha* heritage, it is a late sprouter and may remain dormant well into June.

At the 2003 AGGS Convention, I was awe-struck with by Bill Price's plant of *Achimenes candida* (see photo on page 24). I loved the light green foliage and endless supply of tiny white flowers. This is the one Achimenes that I grow in the house under lights as it seems somewhat delicate. I grow it within about 6" (15 cm) of the lights. However, I now have a good supply of rhizomes from this plant, so I will also try it in the greenhouse this coming year.

For those who enjoy a strong show of colorful flowers, I suggest trying Achimenes. I think you will find them very rewarding.

Growing Achimenes in Florida

Linda Massey & Melissa McDowell
Suncoast Chapter, Sarasota, Florida, USA

Growing Achimenes in the ground, in pots or hanging baskets, outdoors in Florida creates an easy to maintain and beautiful environment for you and your neighbors to enjoy.

Achimenes come in a wide variety of colors: white, red, purple, blue, yellow, orange, pink, violet, rose – almost any color except green – creating a rainbow of colors in your garden all through the warm season. Mostly we grow under trees, shade cloth or an arbor out of direct afternoon sunlight. As Achimenes should never be allowed to wilt, frequent summer showers help with the watering, and using a time-release fertilizer helps to avoid the need for weekly fertilizing.

Some varieties, like *Achimenes grandiflora* 'Robert Dressler', multiply quite well and migrate into nearby areas or pots, sometimes resulting in much confusion and making it essential that your pots are properly labeled. A careful tug on these migrants usually does not damage the roots, and replanting these starters makes them good candidates for gifting.

When the cooler weather returns and the Achimenes have gone back to their dormant stage, many varieties can be left in the ground. Those in pots and baskets can be stored away.

Spring, before Achimenes begin to sprout, is a good time to separate and divide the rhizomes and share them with friends and fellow growers. Replant them in fresh soil and you're off to another vibrant summer in Florida!

What I Have Learned About Growing Achimenes!

Ben Paternoster <ben9@optonline.net>
Huntington, Long Island, New York, USA

I suspect that I have had a least one Achimenes in my plant collection ever since I became familiar with gesneriads over 30 years ago. How could you not want to have Achimenes around to enjoy their beauty? During these many years I have read and heard about many ideas to grow them better and have tried some of them. They have not been easy for me to grow well, that is, as show plants. I would like to share what I have learned so that you may benefit from my experiences.

One of the reasons I persist with this genus is its growth cycle. For individuals like myself with too many plants, this rhizomatous genus goes dormant all winter taking up no growing space. Even when Achimenes are actively growing, they can be moved outdoors during the summer. The only time one needs to provide indoor growing space here on Long Island either under lights, on windowsills, or in a greenhouse is in the spring and in the fall. The fall light doesn't have to be good because the plants are going back into dormancy. There is no good reason for me not to grow some of these very attractive, colorful gesneriads that require so little of my indoor growing space.

Achimenes rhizomes typically sprout anywhere from February through April. They need some warmth and moisture for the sprouting rhizomes to grow into plants. Without these conditions, the new growth will not develop. The sprouted rhizomes will remain in a state of suspended animation until these conditions are provided by either you or nature. If your rhizomes are newly obtained or you stored them last fall (more on storage later) in plastic bags and they are sprouting, you prepare to pot them. Decisions must be made. Are you going to grow them outdoors during the summer or keep them in a more controlled environment indoors? If the decision is for outdoors, are you going to grow them in a hanging basket? Many Achimenes tend to trail and are very suitable for hanging baskets. You should learn whether the varieties you are growing are trailing.

You must plan for the major challenge with Achimenes, that is, drying out during the growing cycle. Achimenes will go dormant and remain dormant for an extended rest period when they dry out. This can be true of some other rhizomatous genera to some degree, but Achimenes are particularly sensitive to drying out. This has implications for how you pot and grow your plants. One may choose to wick the pots; sit them in a saucer of water; add polymers to the growing medium; use a heavier, less open, growing medium; water daily; or use deeper pots to retard or prevent complete drying. This is especially true when growing outdoors where there are drying winds and high temperatures. Of these, I have tried the heavier growing medium. It does help. For me, with my conditions and life style, potting in my usual gesneriad growing medium and watering daily is sufficient. You will have to decide what will work for you.

We are now ready to pot our rhizomes. Place them into the medium you have selected to use. I like to place them vertically with the pointed, sprouted

end up. Others place them horizontally. It doesn't much matter in the long run. The rhizomes should be from a half to one inch below the surface of the potting mix and about an inch apart. At this stage one has to avoid too much moisture because the rhizomes may rot. I either water very lightly or keep the surface moist by misting until I see some active growth above the surface. Moisture can gradually be increased to correspond to the increasing roots developing below the surface and the vegetative growth above the surface.

What about nutrients? This is a very interesting issue with Achimenes. Over these 30 years I have read numerous articles about this topic and I have experimented with the suggestions. I have come to the following conclusions. Achimenes probably require fewer nutrients than many other gesneriads, perhaps because sufficient energy is stored in the rhizomes to get the plants growing actively. At the early stages of active growth, your goal should be to promote compact vegetative growth. Avoid high temperatures and provide strong light and don't push with lots of fertilizers. I hesitate saying how much fertilizer because there are so many variables that affect this decision such as the PH of the mix in which you are growing and the quality of the light. I believe it best to recommend that you go by how the foliage color looks. Once the plant has grown above two nodes, it is wise to pinch out each growing tip right above the first node to cause the plants to branch. This will produce a bushier plant. You can easily root the tips and share with a friend or with the plant sale table at your chapter. One may also use the cuttings to fill any gaps in the pot caused by a rhizome coming up in an unplanned location or not sprouting at all. I have been able to stick a cutting directly into the vacant spot and have it root there without enclosing it under plastic. Once you have a full pot of actively growing Achimenes and you see buds beginning to form, the energy in the planted rhizomes is just about exhausted and it is time to provide more fertilizer. Our goal now is to promote maximum bloom. Again, you don't need high doses, just more. High temperatures are not as important an issue now because we should have a relatively compact plant that is producing buds.

Achimenes will grow and bloom in both sun and shade. When I was first introduced to them, I was given the impression that they should be grown in the shade. When you think of the parts of the world from which they come, the tropics, it is not surprising that they can be acclimated to full sun here in a temperate zone even if they grew in some shade when in the tropics. I have found that strong light keeps the plants more compact. I suggest you provide the strongest light you can provide consistent with your ability to keep them from drying out whether you grow indoors or out.

Your plants should come into bloom during the summer and be at their peak in late summer. As the fall approaches they will begin to look bedraggled, and increasing fertilizer doesn't seem to help. This is a sign that they are exhausted and need a rest. Approximately early October, I cut back on water gradually to encourage dormancy. When the foliage has dried up, I cut it off and prepare to store the rhizomes for the winter rest.

There are two methods to store your rhizomes for the winter dormancy. One method is to take the growing medium out of the pot and search the contents for the rhizomes. These are not the rhizomes you planted in the spring. They were used up in producing the plants. In the interest of preservation, the plants produced many more new rhizomes to continue the life cycle. Unfortunately, the plants will not be able to reward you with plentiful new

rhizomes if you do not do your part in avoiding early dormancy by allowing the plants to completely dry out during active growth. Once all the rhizomes are gathered together, place them in a labeled plastic bag with either vermiculite or perlite that is very slightly moistened to prevent the rhizomes from drying up. Store the bag in a cool but not cold (not near or below freezing) place for the winter. They must be checked periodically to see if they are too dry or wet, or if they have begun to sprout. The second method stores the rhizomes in the medium and pot in which they had grown. Again, cut back the old dried growth and place the pot in a cool spot for the winter. About once a month add a little water to the medium to prevent the rhizomes from drying out. The second method is my preference. I have kept pots of Achimenes going like this for as long as three or four complete cycles before repotting. You can imagine how many rhizomes are in that pot when it is unpotted! My experience with the first method is that if there is too much moisture, a fungus develops, and the rhizomes rot; or, if it becomes too dry in the bag, the rhizomes dry out. For me, the first method has been a challenge. I have better control with the second method.

This takes us back to the beginning of the cycle. In February, I either repot when necessary or just place the stored pots were temperatures are around 70°F (21°C) and add a little moisture to the medium. Once the rhizomes sprout, provide good light and follow the same procedure as for newly planted rhizomes.

I am essentially an outdoor grower of Achimenes because I like to take advantage of the natural dormancy period to conserve valuable indoor growing space for other gesneriads. I just do not have the space and I do not want to give up growing these beautiful plants. When I take them outdoors around the 1st of June, depending on the forecasts and temperatures (minimum of 50°F or 10°C), I place them in the shade. I gradually move them to stronger light. This is what we mean by acclimating to stronger light. I have grown some in full sun. Choose a spot that is protected from strong winds. If you are growing in a hanging basket, hang the basket from a hook that allows the pot to turn in the wind. These hints will help in keeping the plant looking good. Since I water with a hose when I grow outdoors, I tend not to fertilize as often. Indoors my gesneriads are constant fed a weak fertilizer solution (1/8 to 1/4 tsp/gal). Outdoors my feeding is very haphazard and my plants sometimes reflect it.

While I almost never grow Achimenes indoors under fluorescent lights, I have grown some of the intergeneric crosses with Achimenes under fluorescent lights. Achimenes have been crossed with Eucodonias, Niphaeas, and Smithianthas. These genera do not share the same specific life cycle, as Achimenes. Eucodonias and Smithianthas bloom at times other than summer and so do their intergeneric crosses with Achimenes. I have ×*Achimenantha* and ×*Niphimenes* in bloom as I write this article (January). I tend to leave their rhizomes in their pots for a few years, too, before repotting. I leave the pots at the ends of the light bench while dormant, watering occasionally to prevent loss through excessive drying. When the rhizomes sprout, the pots are moved to better light and moisture is gradually increased. Some varieties that are not compact growers benefit from some early pinching and shaping. I constant feed with a weak solution as I do with all my gesneriads on the light bench. I rotate a number of different formulations of fertilizer. Then I sit back and enjoy the show of beautiful blossoms.

Have you learned any useful tips from my experiences with Achimenes? I think the most important message is that you should not fret that they require too much effort. Acquire some rhizomes and try them. Be willing to observe, experiment a little, persevere, and I guarantee you will be rewarded.

Additional Achimenes References from recent issues of THE GLOXINIAN:

1996: Vol. 46, No. 1: entire issue.

1996: Vol. 46, No. 2: pages 14-17. Worley, Patrick. "Achimenes–A Hybridizer's Palette"

1996: Vol. 46, No. 2: pages 23-27. Striepens, Al. "Nutritional Control of Stretching in Achimenes"

2004: Vol. 54, No. 2: pages 31-33. Boggan, John. "Growing Gesneriads Outdoors: Achimenes"

Coming in our next issue ...

More about *Achimenes* and its intergeneric hybrids as well as the genera that cross with it: *Eucodonia, Heppiella, Niphaea*, and *Smithiantha.*

New Publications from The Gesneriad Society

Achimenes Register 2008: 68 pages plus color cover with antique botanical illustrations $8

Convention 2007 CD: 9 PowerPoint files plus hundreds of images $15

GESNERIADS 2007 CD: all 4 journal issues in searchable pdf format plus all images $10

And remember the bulk pricing for "**How to Know and Grow Gesneriads**": $5 each when bought in lots of 25 or more – order some for your club!

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Gesneriad Society Publications, 1122 E Pike Street, PBM 637, Seattle WA 98122

For full listing and online ordering visit:

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Additions to Species List 1Q08:

Besleria comosa JLC9931 (T)
Columnea brenneri JLC9833
Glossoloma ichthyoderma JLC9836 (T)
Diastema affine JLC9964
Diastema racemiferum JLC9824
Drymonia coccinea JLC9980 (T)
• *Gasteranthus wendlandianus* JLC9859 (H,M)
Pearcea sprucei JLC9862 (H,M)
Saintpaulia difficilis #2
Sinningia lindleyi

Send orders for species seed to:
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Hartsdale, NY 10530

Deletions from Species List 1Q08:

Aeschynanthus sp. (yellow)/ Philippines
Chirita asperifolia
Gesneria cuneifolia WEK96151
Gesneria cuneifolia WEK96152
Gesneria cuneifolia WEK96155
Gesneria cuneifolia WEK96157
Gesneria cuneifolia WEK96158
Glossoloma ichthyoderma JLC5626
Sinningia mauroana GRF9964

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79 Beaver Run Road
Lafayette, NJ 07848

Donations from outside the U.S.A. (Canada and other international locations) should be sent to:
Marilyn Allen
8 Brackenridge Place
Port Moody, BC, Canada V3H 4G4

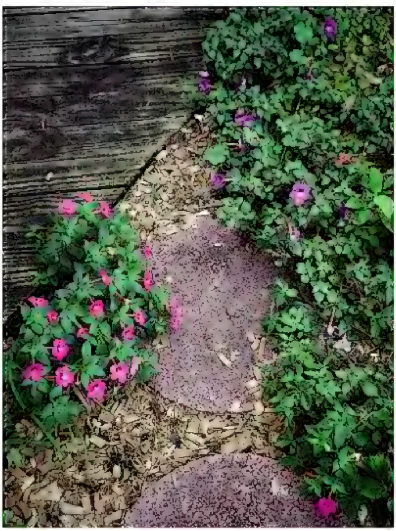
Note for Denver Convention Attendees:

New URL for Gray Line Tours
http://www.grayline.com/Grayline/destinations/us/denver.go

New Achimenes Slide Library Program

Shown below are just a few of the photos included in the revised slide library program where you will see many more Achimenes and learn more about how to grow them. Contact Vivian Scheans, 4660 Dogwood Place, Lake Oswego, OR 97035-8412 or email <vscheans@comcast.net>.

Achimenes growing at Hyogo Flower Center in Kyoto, Japan
(photo by Toshijiro Okuto)



Achimenes hybrids growing outdoors along a garden walkway at the home of Melissa McDowell in Sarasota, Florida (photo by Jeanne Katzenstein)

Achimenes white hybrid growing on the back steps of John Boggan's home in Washington, DC
(photo by John Boggan)

The Gesneriad Society, Inc.

Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet)

Year Ended December 31, 2007

	2006	2007
General Fund		
Checking	$23,239	$8,041
In Savings	1,534	2,289
Endowment CDs:		
Crisafulli Family Award	2,005	2,033
Frelinghuysen Arboretum Chapter Award	2,053	2,074
Benjamin R. Franklin	10,077	10,546
Year-End Balance	**$38,909**	**$24,983**
Elvin McDonald Research Endowment Fund		
CD at Key Bank	$14,446	$15,103
CD at Wa Fed Savings Bank	2,661	2,748
In Savings	12,188	22,219
Year-End Balance	**$29,295**	**$40,070**
Gesneriad Register Fund		
CD at Wa Fed Savings Bank	$9,925	$10,421
In Savings	6,256	6,414
Year-End Balance	**$16,181**	**$16,835**
Frances Batcheller Endowment Fund		
In Savings	$9,962	$10,994
Closed CD Amount in Savings	21,512	0
CD at Key	49,703	0
CD at US Bank	63,682	67,054
CDs at Wa Fed Savings Bank	78,337	81,818
Fidelity Asset Manager/50%	60,115	63,761
Schwab One Account	*New for 2007*	73,091
Year-End Balance	**$283,311**	**$296,718**
Nellie D. Sleeth Scholarship Endowment Fund		
In Savings	$125	$331
CD at Wa Fed Savings Bank	102,326	102,381
Year-End Balance	**$102,451**	**$102,712**
The Society has no Liabilities		
TOTAL NET ASSETS	**$470,147**	**$481,318**

There are no year-end open items (i.e., uncleared checks)

Statement of Activities (Income Statement)

January 1, 2007 thru December 31, 2007

General Fund	
REVENUES	
Ads in Journal Gesneriads	$100
Donations – Color Photo Sponsorships	995
Convention Registrations and Other Related Receipts	51,376
Insurance Payments from Chapters	881
Judging Publications/Appraisal	855
Membership	27,052
Promotions Sales	1,435
Publication Sales (including new *Know & Grow* manual)	7,481
Seed Fund Sales	5,329
Other Revenues	1,944
Total Revenues	$97,448

Statement of Activities (Income Statement) *Continued*

EXPENSES	
Publication of Journal GESNERIADS	$37,124
Appraisal Publication and Distribution	409
Membership Processing	1,416
Publication and Distribution of *Know & Grow* Manual	11,705
Website Redesign Work	1,980
Chair Expenses	5,092
Stipends	3,200
Insurance Expenses	4,558
Convention Expenses	41,528
Credit Card Processing	2,862
Other Expenses	1,500
Total Expenses	$111,374
Increase(Decrease) in General Fund	**($13,926)**

ELVIN MCDONALD RESEARCH ENDOWMENT FUND

REVENUES	
Interest from CDs and Savings	$856
2007 Convention Auction Proceeds	5,413
Donations	4,506
Total Revenues	$10,775
EXPENSES	(0)
Increase (Decrease) in Fund	**$10,775**

GESNERIAD REGISTER FUND

REVENUES	
Sales of Registers	$113
Interest from CDs and Savings	541
Total Revenues	$654
EXPENSES	(0)
Increase (Decrease) in Fund	**$654**

FRANCES BATCHELLER ENDOWMENT FUND

REVENUES	
Life Memberships	$3,375
Donations	90
Interest from CDs and Savings	7,855
Change in Value:	
Fidelity Asset Manager Fund	3,646
Schwab One Account	941
Total Revenues	$15,907
EXPENSES	
Grant Awarded: Marie Selby Botanical Gardens	($2,500)
Increase (Decrease) in Fund	**$13,407**

NELLIE D. SLEETH SCHOLARSHIP ENDOWMENT FUND

REVENUES	
Donations	$205
Interest from CDs and Savings	4,556
Total Revenues	$4,761
EXPENSES	
Grant Awarded: J. R. Clark	($4,500)
Increase (Decrease) in Fund	**$261**

Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Fontes, Treasurer

Donations

Paul Susi, Development Chairperson
<development@gesneriadsociety.org>

The following donations were made to The Gesneriad Society during the period July through December 2007. Each donor's generosity is greatly appreciated.

ELVIN MCDONALD RESEARCH ENDOWMENT FUND – $195

Frank Barthel
Laura Buckner
Sharon Leary, in memory of Michael Leary
Dora Parla
The Tampa Bay Gesneriad Society

FRANCES BATCHELLER ENDOWMENT FUND – $25

Mollie Schneider, in memory of Norma Chenkin

NELLIE D. SLEETH SCHOLARSHIP ENDOWMENT FUND – $200

Ben Paternoster, in memory of Norma Chenkin
Paul Susi and Randy Baron, in memory of Norma Chenkin

FUND FOR PROGRESS/COLOR FUND – $800

Lois Buschke
Jeanne Katzenstein, in memory of her mother, Mildred Stensler; also, in lieu of judges' honorarium, Heart of America Chapter Show
Dale Martens, in lieu of speaker's honorarium, Tennessee Gesneriad Society
Lynn Moore, in memory of Allan Cyster
Ben Paternoster, in memory of Mildred Stensler
Quentin Schlieder, in memory of Norma Chenkin
Wallace Wells, in lieu of speaker's honorarium, Greater New York Gesneriad Society
Participants of the 2007 Expedition to Ecuador: Jeanne Katzenstein, Karyn Cichocki, Bob Clark, Candice Eckard, Gussie Farrice, Lena Klintberg, Michael Riley and Carolyn Ripps, with thanks to John L. Clark

LIFE MEMBERSHIPS: Roxanne Conlin, Iain James, Lena Klintberg and Kathryn Macartney. Bob and Dee Stewart were awarded life memberships when they received their Award of Appreciation at the 2007 Miami Convention. All Life Membership dues are deposited in the Frances Batcheller Endowment Fund.

YEAR-END APPEAL – $4525

At the end of 2007, a special year-end appeal was mailed to all Life Members of The Gesneriad Society. The following Life Members made generous contributions in 2007 to the Elvin McDonald Research Endowment Fund ($4425), the Nellie D. Sleeth Scholarship Endowment Fund ($50) and the Color Fund ($50):

Frances Batcheller
Edward Bradford
Karyn Cichocki, in memory of Norma Chenkin
Bob Clark and Peter Shalit
Ann Marie Clyatt
Charles Fishbaugh
Gwen Goodship-Patience
Yoshiko K. Graham
Mel Grice, in honor of Ben Paternoster, for his help with the Long Island Gesneriad Society's Newsletter
Susan Grose, in honor of gesneriad researchers
Nell Hennessy and Frank Daspit
Vivian Hiltz
Jeanne Katzenstein
Jo Anne Martinez, in memory of her father, Norman Castellano, and in honor of her mother, Angie Castellano
Leonard Re
Michael Riley, in memory of Norma Chenkin
Carolyn Ripps, in memory of Norma Chenkin
Molly Schneider, in memory of her mother, Loys Marsden
Paul Susi, in honor of Elvin McDonald
Leong Tuck-Luck, in memory of Maryjane Evans
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	Gesneriad-Dicts of Western New York — Doug Burdick, 2366 Doran Rd., Lima, NY 14485
	Greater New York — Michael A. Riley, 101 West 104th St., New York, NY 10025
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Go to www.gesneriadsociety.org for chapter email contacts.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Membership Cards: The address label on the back cover of GESNERIADS is your membership card.

Bylaws: Copies of The Gesneriad Society Bylaws are available to all members by writing to Allison Brigham, 1122 8th Street, Golden, CO 80401-1009.

Chapters: Report changes of chapter presidents to the Chapters and Affiliates Chair and the Editor.

Donations

The Gesneriad Society, Inc. is a tax-exempt organization with an IRS section 501 (c)(3) status for donations. You can make your donations online at www.gesneriadsociety.org. You may also send your donation (check payable to The Gesneriad Society) to:

Paul Susi, Development Chairperson
10 Briarwood Lane, Millerton, NY 12546

For additional information, contact: <development@gesneriadsociety.org>.

Membership and Changes of Address

The Gesneriad Society Membership Secretary, Bob Clark,
1122 East Pike Street, PMB 637, Seattle, WA 98122-3916 USA

Changes of Address — Send changes of address to the Membership Secretary <membership @gesneriadsociety.org> 90 days prior to moving to avoid missing an issue. The Society is not responsible for replacing issues missed because of late notification of address changes. Back issues may be ordered from The Gesneriad Society Publications.

Renewals — Send dues to the Membership Secretary. A Renewal Notice is sent two months prior to the expiration date of your membership. (The expiration date is printed on your mailing label/membership card on the back cover of GESNERIADS.) Please remit your dues prior to the expiration date to avoid missing an issue as we are not responsible for replacing issues missed because of late payment of dues. Back issues may be ordered from Publications.

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WELCOME – membership in our international society includes quarterly issues of *GESNERIADS – The Journal for Gesneriad Growers,* a copy of *How to Know and Grow Gesneriads*, a packet of gesneriad seeds and a wealth of information about our Chapters, Flower Shows, Publications, Research, Slide Programs and Seed Fund. Membership begins upon receipt of dues.

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I wish to make an additional tax-deductible contribution of $ _____

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☐ Color Fund for GESNERIADS ☐ Nellie D. Sleeth Scholarship Endowment Fund

☐ In Honor ☐ Memory of _____

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